

Attention: Independent Regulatory Review Commission

Please, read. I am writing in opposition of common core. I feel particularly qualified to express my concerns because I have a very real and tangible stake at issue: the educational well-being of my four children.

On the surface common core sounds great. If you watch the video at <http://www.cgcs.org/domain/157> it looks even better. The ideas sound lofty and ambitious. But as with all things that affect my children I take nothing at face value, especially when most of the videos and literature on the new curriculum remind me of infomercials.

My grandfather always told me that if something is over-advertised as the greatest thing ever, look carefully into the details, wait, watch, and investigate for yourself. After the hype, eventually the truth will come out, and everyone will be caught by surprise except for those who were wise enough to look at the facts instead of the ads.

Moreover, why was I warned to expect my children's PSSA scores to drop substantially as a result of teaching from the new common core curriculum? If this new curriculum doubles the amount of time our children spend studying math in school and triples the amount of time our children spend studying reading to the detriment of other subjects including science and history, then why should we be warned to expect our children's assessment scores of math and reading on their state PSSA assessments to drop substantially?

I am troubled by my research into the new common core state standards. Specifically I learned that:

1. The initial goal of creating these standards to make our children competitive in the global market was quietly abandoned in favor of a set of mediocre standards attainable by even the poorest performing schools. While these new standards are higher than the previous standards in a few states they are lower than previous standards in most states including our own state of PA.
2. Most states signed on to implement these standards before the standards were written and many of these states have subsequently revoked their decision to adapt these standards after reading the final product
3. While our PSSA standards were developed by our own PA Department of Education, the common core state standards were written by two unelected trade organizations based out of Washington, DC, and they have through legal means exempt themselves from all possible liability through a copyright protection law.

4. Common Core State Standards must be adapted in full and they cannot be deviated from. Schools can only add up to 15% of additional curriculum to the common core standards and remain in compliance.
5. The common core state standards lower our math expectations. The only mathematician on the common core validation committee refused to sign his name to the final product because it was so inferior to the initial goal that it would actually inhibit graduates of the public school system from being able to compete in or comprehend advanced math.
6. Applied science, with chemistry labs and math applications have been replaced by science appreciation, most of which will be taught in the context of other subjects and overall time spent studying science will be reduced.
7. The initial goal of making our children ready for challenging career choices at universities was instead reduced to a goal of making them capable of transitioning to a community college.
8. The new curriculum abandons the teaching of Euclidean geometry in favor of a new experimental approach. This change not only inhibits a parent's ability to help his or her child with homework, but can actually harm the child's math development. This experimental approach has never been successfully used in any sizable system; in fact it even failed at a school for gifted children in Moscow where it was pioneered. For additional information on the complete restructuring of the teaching of math please see my references.
9. Big businesses are pushing, providing advertising for, and promoting the adaptation of these standards because they stand to benefit substantially from their implementation.
10. Documentation of our children's reactions and results from the implementation of this new set of standards will not only be held by the federal government in a database but can also be sold to business for research and marketing purposes. Thus far Nine states, thankfully not yet PA, have agreed to this data mining component of common core and are using a new database managed by inBloom, Inc. as a means of streamlining the implementation of the common core state standards. InBloom, Inc. is a private organization funded largely by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Through inBloom, Inc "Researchers are exploring how to gather complex affective data and generate meaningful and usable information to feed back to learners, teachers, researchers, and the technology itself." The information is stored and can even be sold to third parties with the consent of the school district. According to Bill Gates the common core state standards will provide an endless supply of new consumers.
11. Children will be required to read predominately informational texts during reading class instead of traditionally required fictional works which promote creativity and inspire a love of reading.

12. The window of opportunity to centralize the curriculum and track children's scores was put in place under the Bush administration in 2002. Beverly K. Eakman, educator, writer and researcher warned prior to the implementation of No Child Left Behind that under the guise of education reform tying federal funds to mandatory state testing was the opening of a Pandora's Box. She warned that it would be very difficult to reclose that box if No Child Left Behind was passed. She warned that the future of education would be harmed and not helped by the opening of this Pandora's Box.

I have attached documentation establishing all of the above points: Please review it and discern for yourselves.

Why are we doing this to our children? I can understand why the trade organizations who own the copyright are pushing for full implementation. I can also understand why big businesses favor this because they stand to benefit directly from it. Companies such as GE and Microsoft stand to make a bundle with online testing and computer imaging involved in later stages of implementation and information storage. Publishing companies also stand to benefit because schools will need materials for the new changed curriculum to accompany the new standards. In explaining how the new standards will drive a whole new curriculum the chief architect of the Common Core State Standards, David Coleman, stated, "If you put something on an assessment in my view you are ethically obligated to take responsibility that kids will practice it 100 times." I do not understand why oil companies are pushing for this nor can I fathom a guess. But what I really do not understand is why our state is pushing for this. If other states want to try this untested, unaccountable curriculum experiment, then more power to them; they are accountable to their citizens.

Two of my children who have always loved school, are straight A students, and have always scored advanced on all state testing asked me why they now have to sit through two periods of remedial math every day. I explained it to my children in this way.

I asked them to think of our state like a doctor's office and the students like the patients. I told them that some of the patients in the doctor's office were very sick and that the doctor very much wanted to help those patients. I explained to them that in an effort to help those patients, who were in some cases critical the doctor made a deal with a new drug company to pilot a brand new and untested drug in the hopes of curing those critical patients. The doctor's intentions were good and he really wanted to help those critically ill patients so he decided to try the new drug. However, the drug company had an agenda of their own and they had a few previously undisclosed rules

for this doctor. The drug company explained that the price tag for trying this new drug was the requirement that the doctor administer this drug to all of his patients, those who were very ill, those who were ill but were showing improvement with current treatments, and those who were already thriving on current treatments. The doctor was further required to document the effects of this drug across the full spectrum of patients and share this information in the name of research. Furthermore the doctor was given no assurances that this would even help those critical patients and was instead informed that neither his patients nor he had any recourse in the event that any of his patients were harmed by this new drug. In addition the doctor learned that most of the claims made by the drugs marketing company were false. I told my children that this not only their plight but the plight of all of the students in the PA school system and the teachers and staff as well because they are forced to go along with this new system or lose their funding. One of my children responded by informing me that the teachers are so busy trying to implement the new curriculum that they have not even noticed that students who used to love school now hate it and are bored numb. I sort of laughed at the notion that teachers were too busy to see the forest through the trees and my child became insulted with my nonchalance and said, "Really mom it's like they have been hypnotized." I asked my children to be patient while I try to help free our state and our school from this noose. But I reassured them that I heard their concerns and I promised that I would not let this new common core curriculum extinguish their passion for learning.

I do not yet know what lies ahead for my children. I guess my plans depend on your plans. We have a chance to do the right thing for all of our PA school children. Please! opt out of the common core state standards. If we continue to implement the common core in our PA schools it will be the beginning of the end of public education in PA because anyone with the means will send their children to private school . . . it will inflict profound damage on the schools, teachers and, most importantly, students left in the PA common core school system. I would like to close with following poem:

"One Hundred Years From Now" Author Unknown

One hundred years from now. . . It won't matter

What kind of car I drove. . . What kind of house I lived in

How much money I had in the bank. . . Nor what my cloths looked like.

BUT

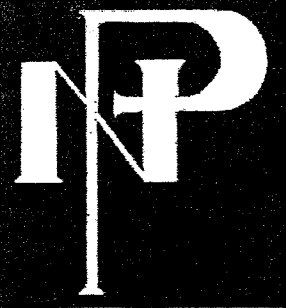
The world may be a little better Because, I was important in the life of a child.

Thank you,

Maurice Allen

North Pocono School District

701 Church Street, Moscow, Pennsylvania 18444-9391



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October 15, 2013

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The North Pocono School District has embarked upon an exciting educational journey. With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, districts have been asked to change student expectations and learning. The administration and professional staff have begun working on making important changes to content knowledge and instructional delivery.

We are making this change to the Core Standards because we want every single one of our students to be on track for college and careers by the time they graduate from high school. Our former standards did not prepare all of our students for 21st century college and careers. The Core Standards will:

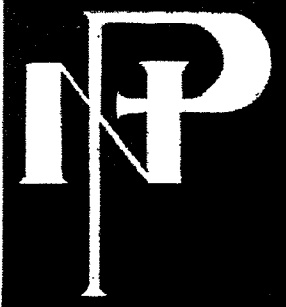
- help students gain the knowledge and skills that they need to think and work at that deeper level
- create opportunities for all students to excel at reading, writing, speaking, listening, language and math
- support students to think critically about what they read and the math that they compute
- allow teachers and students to focus on fewer critical concepts in mathematics more deeply
- build students' abilities to apply what they have learned to the real world
- ensure that all students can communicate strong ideas and arguments in writing and react powerfully to what they read.

The Core Standards are new, challenging standards and we know that students won't be able to meet these standards without the support of teachers, parents and communities. In particular, we have been working with teachers and principals to understand how instruction should change to get students where they need to be. Teachers and principals have been working to make these important changes to help their students to achieve at higher levels. You have likely seen and will continue to experience noticeable changes in what and how your child is learning in school. This could include what you see in classrooms, finished work that comes home, or even homework assigned to your child.

The district has created a Common Core link on its website to help you look for these changes and many other resources to help support your children's learning.

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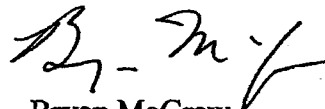
<http://www.npsd.org>

It is important to note that there may be changes in test scores (including, possibly, one of your child's score). The potential drop does not mean that students are learning less or that teachers and schools are performing worse. Proficiency rates – the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standards – based on the new Core instruction/assessment cannot be compared with proficiency results based on the former standards. This is a new beginning and starting point that will provide better, clearer information to parents, teachers, and administrators about what our children know and are able to achieve. The results from future assessments based on the Core Standards will help us directly address the learning needs of our children so that they get and stay on track for college and career success.

We all want the same thing: for all of our children to succeed in 21st century colleges and careers, to be good citizens, and to contribute to their community. The changes that we are making now provide us with a new opportunity to make sure that every single North Pocono School District student graduates from high school prepared and able to make choices about his or her own future in a dynamic and competitive economy. Seeing a change in instructional practices and assessment scores can be challenging for any parent, school, community, or state, but we know that where we are now only marks a beginning of future successes.

Please contact your child's teacher, building level administrator, or my office should you have any questionings regarding the transition to the Core.

Sincerely,



Bryan McGraw
Superintendent of Schools

Works Referenced

The web pages are listed and if space allowed the information has been copied in full for your review.

<http://whatiscommoncore.wordpress.com/2012/05/16/whats-really-wrong-with-common-core-math/> see below

How Common Core math dumbs down math: mathematician # 1: Ze'ev Wurman

Ze'ev Wurman is a great mathematician who served as Senior Policy Adviser in the U.S. Department of Education 2007-2009 and served on the California Standards Commission that evaluated Common Core math standards for that state.

Wurman reviewed the Common Core Standards in math and stated: "they fail to achieve their stated goal of improving U.S. K-12 mathematic achievement."

Ze'ev Wurman also set forth this description of major deficiencies of Common Core in math:

1. Its abandonment of the expectation that students take Algebra I in grade 8. This expectation, based on the standard of the high-achieving countries (and our international competitors), has currently pushed about half of American students to take Algebra I by grade 8, more than double that of a decade ago. The Common Core will reverse this trend by firmly **relocating Algebra I back to a grade 9** high-school course. This change means that, as a practical matter, **the great majority of American students will not be able to reach calculus in high school.** Among other consequences, far fewer students will be able to take and excel in Advanced Placement (AP) math courses if the Common Core is implemented.
2. Related to the above-deficiency, a course of study aligned with the Common Core would provide students with poor preparation for taking Algebra in grade 8. Only private and elite schools will continue to provide sufficient preparation and, consequently, one should expect the proportion of students from challenging backgrounds taking Algebra by grade 8, or advanced mathematics in high school, to drop precipitously.
3. Common Core replaces the traditional foundations of Euclidean geometry with an experimental approach. This approach has never been successfully used in any sizable system; in fact, it failed even in the school for gifted and talented students in Moscow, where it was originally invented. Yet Common Core effectively **imposes this experimental approach on the entire country, without any piloting.**

4. Common Core excludes certain Algebra II and Geometry content that is currently a prerequisite at almost every four-year state college (see point 9 below). This effectively **redefines “college-readiness” to mean readiness for a nonselective community college, as a member of the Common Core writing team acknowledged in his testimony before the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.**
5. Common Core **fails to teach prime factorization** and consequently does not include teaching about least common denominators or greatest common factors.
6. Common Core **fails to include conversions among fractions, decimals, and percents**, identified as a key skill by the National Research Council, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the presidential National Advisory Mathematics Panel.
7. Common Core **de-emphasizes algebraic manipulation**, which is a prerequisite for advanced mathematics, and instead effectively redefines algebra as “functional algebra,” which does not prepare students for STEM careers.
8. More specifically, at the K-8 grade span:
 - 8.1 Common Core **does not require proficiency with addition and subtraction until grade 4, a grade behind** the expectations of the high-performing states and our international competitors.
 - 8.2 Common Core **does not require proficiency with multiplication using the standard algorithm (step-by-step procedure for calculations) until grade 5, a grade behind** the expectations of the high-performing states and our international competitors.
 - 8.3 Common Core **does not require proficiency with division using the standard algorithm until grade 6, a grade behind** the expectations of the high-performing states and our international competitors.
 - 8.4 Common Core **starts teaching decimals only in grade 4, about two years behind** the more rigorous state standards, and fails to use money as a natural introduction to this concept.
 - 8.5 Common Core **fails to teach in K-8 about key geometrical concepts such as the area of a triangle, sum of angles in a triangle, isosceles and equilateral triangles, or constructions with a straightedge and compass that good state standards include.**
9. At the high school grades:
 - 9.1 Common Core **barely touches on logarithms, of great importance for chemistry, physics, and STEM in general.**
 - 9.2 Common Core fails to address mathematical induction.

9.3 Common Core fails to address parametric equations, and infinite geometric series (progressions with common ratio), and incompletely addresses conic sections.

9.4 Common Core omits in trigonometry the phase of periodic functions, half-angle formulas, and polar forms and functions.

Common Core suffers from a number of systemic defects. It groups mathematics standards into “conceptual categories,” which provide a vague structure for high school courses and makes for difficult use by teachers and textbook publishers. It provides verbose and imprecise guidance as to the level of fluency needed, omits basic skills such as factorization (reducing problems to the basic “building blocks” of the equation), and deemphasizes algebraic manipulation, leading to under-preparation for STEM disciplines. In terms of college readiness, its content is far below what is presently expected for college eligibility, which will create unreasonable expectations by parents and pressure on state universities to admit under-prepared students, with concomitant growth in remedial enrollment in college.

In this statement, I have endeavored to set forth a concise list of deficiencies in the Common Core math standards. Certainly, the issue requires more detailed discussion, and in that respect I draw your attention to the following study: Sandra Stotsky and Ze’ev Wurman, *Common Core’s Standards Still Don’t Make the Grade*, Pioneer Institute, No. 65 (July 2010). http://www.pioneerinstitute.org/pdf/common_core_standards.pdf

-Ze’ev Wurman

How Common Core math dumbs down math: mathematician # 2:

Professor James Milgram of Stanford University

Mathematics Professor R. James Milgram of Stanford University was the only mathematician on the Common Core Validation Committee.

He concluded that the mathematics standards would put students two years behind those of many high-achieving countries, such as those in East Asia. Like Dr. Sandra Stotsky, **Dr. Milgram refused to sign off on the adequacy of the Common Core standards.** Milgram identified several specific problems with the math standards; a significant concern was that Common Core places algebra I in grade 9 rather than grade 8. This means that the large majority of students will not reach calculus in high school, as expected by good 4-year colleges.

Professor Milgram concluded that the Standards simply do not qualify as “comparable to the expectations of other leading nations.”

“In most high-performing countries, calculus is a high school graduation requirement. **It’s almost a joke to think students [who master the common standards] would be ready for math at a university.**” Professor Milgram added that at Stanford University calculus is “considered remedial.”

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/state_edwatch/Controlling-Education-From-the-Top%5B1%5D.pdf

How Common Core math dumbs down math: mathematician # 3:

Professor Johnathan Goodman of New York University

Professor Jonathan Goodman of New York University criticized Common Core’s “**significantly lower expectations with respect to algebra and geometry** than the published standards of other countries.”

How Common Core math dumbs down math: mathematician # 4:

Professor Andrew Porter, Dean of University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education

Professor Andrew Porter, dean of the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, found “surprising” results about the **lack of international competitiveness** of both the ELA and the math standards.

How Common Core math dumbs down math: mathematician # 5:

Professor Michael W. Kirst, Professor Emeritus, Stanford University:

“My concern is the assertion in the draft that the standards for college and career readiness are essentially the same. This implies the answer is yes to the question of whether the same standards are appropriate for 4 year universities, 2 year colleges, and technical colleges. The burden of proof for this assertion rests with CCSSO/NGA, and **the case is not proven from the evidence presented...**”

<http://www.monolithic3d.com/2/post/2011/8/education-to-raise-technology-consumers-instead-of-technology-creators.html>

Education to Raise Technology Consumers instead of Technology Creators

08/04/2011

We have a guest contribution today from Ze'ev Wurman, the Chief Software Architect of Monolithic 3D Inc. In this blog-post, Ze'ev discusses some industry implications of recent events relating to science education. Ze'ev has participated in developing California's education standards and assessments in mathematics since the mid-1990s. Between 2007 and 2009, he served as a senior policy adviser at the U.S. Department of Education. Throughout their development Wurman analyzed the Common Core mathematics standards drafts for the Pioneer Institute. In the summer of 2010 he served on the California Academic Content Standards Commission that reviewed the adoption of Common Core for California. Wurman earned his BSEE and MSEE degrees from the Technion in Israel, and he is a recipient of the Eliyahu Golomb Israel Security Award.

Monolithic 3D is not unlike many other Silicon Valley startups. Around the table you find engineers from India, East Asia, Israel, and Europe. All received their primary education overseas, and a few their college education in the United States. But it is only few and far between that we find an engineer who was raised and educated here. This has been my experience for more than 25 years, and over that time the fraction of young, American-educated engineers continued to dwindle. I was reminded of this state of affairs reading **Tuesday's Wall Street Journal** about several initiatives, launched by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, designed to attract and retain foreign entrepreneurs, particularly those in the high-tech sector who wish to launch start-up companies in the United States.

One could well ask why in the midst of a recession recovery (in some circles) the U.S. would try to attract more foreign, highly educated scientists and engineers to our shores. Yet we, who live in the Silicon Valley, know the answer: fewer and fewer American students are interested or able, to enter demanding science and engineering programs. In 2006 the fraction of foreign undergraduate students in engineering reached 45%, in computer science 44%, and in physical sciences 40%. In 2007, the fraction of foreign students receiving doctorates in science and engineering was even larger: 62% in engineering overall, 73% in electrical engineering, and 57% in computer science. (NSF S&E Indicators, 2010)

Consequently, I was excited when the National Research Council recently published its new **Framework for K-12 Science Education**, in which it outlines its vision for improving teaching science in America in the 21st century. The framework has prestigious authors in science and science education and they promise us a

coherent and consistent approach throughout grades K-12 [that] is key to realizing the vision for science and engineering education embodied in the framework: [where] students, over multiple years of school, actively engage in science and engineering practices and apply crosscutting

concepts to deepen their understanding of each fields disciplinary core ideas.[p. ES-2]

The National Academies, this framework's publisher, **stresses promoting American competitiveness as an important goal:**

Science, engineering, and technology permeate nearly every facet of modern life and hold the key to meeting many of humanity's most pressing challenges, both present and future. To address the critical issues of U.S. competitiveness and to better prepare the workforce, Framework for K-12 Science Education proposes a new approach to K-12 science education that will capture students' interest and provide them with the necessary foundational knowledge in the field.

This certainly looks promising, particularly because the framework for the first time introduces engineering as a subject of study for our K-12 students. Yet as I kept reading the document's 280 pages of lofty prose, I noticed something odd: **The framework does not expect students to use any kind of analytical mathematics while studying science.**

For example, the framework promotes a practice called Using Mathematics, Information and Computer Technology, and Computational Thinking (p. 3-13). Yet one observes that after singing paeans to the importance of mathematics, it only expects students by grade 12 to be competent in "recognizing," "expressing," and "using simple mathematical expressions to see if they make sense," but not in actually solving science problems using mathematics. Its other suggestions include the use of computer programs and simulations, ability to analyze data using computer tools and spreadsheets, modeling, and describing systems using charts and graphs. But there is nothing about actually being able to model a system by its equations, or solve it using mathematical techniques. The framework also includes as one of its Cross Cutting Concepts something it calls Systems and System Models (p. 4-7), but there, yet again, it does not expect students to use mathematics for that modeling. Its models "can range in complexity from lists and simple sketches to detailed computer simulations or functioning prototypes," but mathematics is left behind.

One searches in vain for words like algebra in the text. Instead one finds only one(!) instance of something called algebraic symbolism, which allows taking *relationships [that] are expressed using equalities first in words* and changing them into *algebraic symbols for example, shifting from distance traveled = velocity multiplied by time elapsed to $s = vt$* **Incidentally, this is the single equation in the whole 280 pages of the science framework.** One should not even bother to search for mentions of calculus or trigonometry. Only statistics and computer applications seem to have a place in this strange document.

All of this made me think. Before Lavoisier's quantitative approach there was no chemistry, only Alchemy. Before Newton's invention of calculus, physics was more a craft than a science. Mathematics has been inseparable from science for the last 300 years, and has been largely responsible for the world we live in. Yet here we have a 21st century science framework for our student that effectively ignores mathematics.

I went back and re-read the document to make sure I didn't miss anything. And, indeed, I did not. Turns out it was staring at me right there on the first page:

*The **overarching goal** of our framework for K-12 science education is to ensure that by the end*

*of 12th grade, all students **have some appreciation of the beauty and wonder of science; possess sufficient knowledge of science and engineering to engage in public discussions on related issues; are careful consumers of scientific and technological information related to their everyday lives; are able to continue to learn about science outside school; and have the skills to enter careers of their choice, including (but not limited to) careers in science, engineering, and technology.** [p. ES-1, emphasis added]*

Suddenly it all became clear. This framework does not expect our students to be able to do any science, or to be able to solve any science problem. This framework simply teaches our students science appreciation, rather than science. It expects our students to become good consumers of science and technology, rather than prepare them to be the discoverers of science and creators of technology.

<http://www.educationnews.org/education-policy-and-politics/does-common-core-provide-an-international-benchmark/#sthash.nPOtie5N.dpuf>

Does Common Core Provide an International Benchmark? - See more at:

<http://www.educationnews.org/education-policy-and-politics/does-common-core-provide-an-international-benchmark/#sthash.nPOtie5N.dpuf>

A common myth, says Jim Stergios, bandied around American education currently is that the Common Core national standards are internationally benchmarked. According to Stergios writing at Boston.com, this claim is highly questionable at best, and outright false at worst. The question of whether Common Core standards are internationally benchmarked boils down to whether we think the new national standards will make our country's classroom content comparable to the content taught in the best-performing nations. Stergios doesn't think it does: "The answer is no... The facts show the Common Core standards to be mediocre in rigor and below what high achieving nations expect of their students." The only mathematician on Common Core Validation Committee, Prof. R. James Milgram of Stanford University, doesn't think so either. In fact, he even refused to sign them. "This is where the problem with these standards is most marked," wrote Milgram in his refusal letter. "While the difference between these standards and those of the top states at the end of eighth grade is perhaps somewhat more than one year, the difference is more like two years when compared to the expectations of the high-achieving countries — particularly most of the nations of East Asia." Prof. Sandra Stotsky of the University of Arkansas, another of the Common Core Validation Committee, refused to sign on to them and wrote: "The two English-speaking areas for which I could find assessment material (British Columbia and Ireland) have far more demanding requirements for college readiness." Stotsky claims that the British Commonwealth examinations she has witnessed were far more demanding in reading and literature in terms of the knowledge base students needed for taking and passing them. "No material was ever provided to the Validation Committee or to the public on the specific college readiness expectations of other leading nations in mathematics or language and literature." Stergios believes that Common Core standards are not all that they're advertised to be and invites people to be aware of what these eminent academics think. Prof. William McCallum of the University of Arizona, one of the three

writers of the mathematics standards, when speaking to a forum of mathematicians, said: "While acknowledging the concerns about front-loading demands in early grades, [McCallum] said that the overall standards would not be too high, certainly not in comparison [with] other nations, including East Asia, where math education excels." This comes after Alabama Gov. Bentley's overturning of Alabama's adoption of the Common Core Standards Initiative in a vote this week. Stotsky told the Statehouse meeting that Common Core's English standards for Grades 6-12 are mediocre and lack comparisons to other countries. **"Making this country competitive was one reason for developing national standards," she said. "But this goal was quietly abandoned ... in favor of a single set of mediocre standards for all students."** - See more at: <http://www.educationnews.org/education-policy-and-politics/does-common-core-provide-an-international-benchmark/#sthash.nPOtie5N.dpuf>

<http://hechingerreport.org/content/why-states-are-backing-out-on-common-standards-and-tests-12895/>

Why states are backing out on common standards and tests

By Charles Chieppo and Jamie Gass

The bloom is surely off the rose of Common Core, the new English and math standards pushed by Washington, D.C. education trade organizations and the Obama administration. In the last few months, a number of states have paused or de-funded implementation of the standards; others have pulled out of the consortia developing tests tied to them.

In recent years, the Obama administration has made a number of federal goodies, such as Race to the Top grants and No Child Left Behind waivers, contingent on states' adoption of Common Core standards and assessments. But now that Race to the Top money has been spent, states are belatedly taking a clear-eyed look at Common Core. High-performing states in particular won't like what they see.

In a recent *Boston Globe* op-ed marking the 20th anniversary of the Massachusetts education reform law that triggered dramatic improvements in the performance of Bay State students, Tom Birmingham, one of the law's principal authors, wrote: "the political vectors will all tend to push the new standards to a race to the middle ... In implementing the Common Core, there will be natural pressure to set the national standards at levels that are realistically achievable by students in all states. This marks a retreat from Massachusetts' current high standards."

Birmingham, a Rhodes Scholar and former president of the Massachusetts Senate, may well be among the least calculating or self-serving people ever to have attained high elective office, but it doesn't take Machiavelli to know how these politics are likely to play out.

Most high-performing states also had rigorous standards prior to Common Core. For them, the new standards represent a significant step down from the academic rigor that was the foundation of their success.

Compared to Massachusetts' previous standards, Common Core reduces the amount of classic literature, poetry and drama taught in English classes by 60 percent. Goodbye Charles Dickens, Arthur Conan Doyle, Mark Twain and Edith Wharton.

In math, the new common standards delay the progression to all-important Algebra I—the gateway to higher math study—by two years. Stanford University emeritus mathematics professor James Milgram, the only academic mathematician on Common Core's validation committee, refused to sign off on the final draft. Milgram described the standards as having “extremely serious failings” and reflecting “very low expectations.”

The scores of U.S. students are already mediocre at best compared to their counterparts in other industrialized nations. It is a condition that could become permanent if scores in the highest-performing states revert to the mean. In contrast with their peers in other states, Massachusetts' eighth-graders tied for best in the world in science in the 2007 Trends in International Math and Science Study.

Common Core poses a different problem for lower-performing states. In his *Globe* op-ed, Birmingham wrote that “for all its complexity, the Education Reform Act can be reduced, in essence, to two propositions: We will make a massive infusion of progressively distributed dollars into our public schools, and in return, we demand high standards and accountability from all education stakeholders.”

The massive infusion of new money is proving to be the Achilles' heel for an increasing number of low-performing states that have adopted Common Core. A 2012 Pioneer Institute study estimated that transitioning to the new standards will cost states about \$16 billion over seven years. Technology upgrades, new textbooks and instructional materials, and teacher training and support account for most of the expense.

The costs of implementing the standards, or costs associated with the two consortia of states developing assessments tied to Common Core, have caused a number of states to drop out. Within the last year, Alabama and Utah pulled out of the *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium*. In recent weeks, Georgia and Oklahoma dropped out of the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers* (PARCC) consortium.

Meanwhile, state legislative leaders in Florida asked Tony Bennett, former state education commissioner, to withdraw from PARCC last month after determining that the new exams would double per-pupil testing costs. And Indiana, Michigan and Pennsylvania have put Common Core standards and testing on “pause” or frozen state funding for implementation.

When 45 states and the District of Columbia quickly adopted Common Core in their pursuit of federal largesse, it seemed the common standards and tests would take the country by storm. Fast-forward three years, and the nation is split between higher-performing states chafing at the prospect of less rigorous standards leading to declining student performance, and their lower-performing counterparts that are unwilling or unable to fund the transition to Common Core tests.

Charles Chieppo is a senior fellow, and Jamie Gass directs the Center for School Reform, at Pioneer Institute, a Boston-based public policy think tank.

What Is Common Core? on April 13, 2013 by Jeffrey Horn.

<http://stopcommoncoreinwisconsin.com/category/what-is-ccss/>

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a set of learning standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

„These standards will replace existing state standards in these subject areas. CCSS for Science and Social Studies are also in development.“

„The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.“ – CCSS Mission Statement

See <http://corestandards.org> for the infomercial.

Who Developed Common Core State Standards

„Despite being called “State Standards”, Common Core State Standards **were not developed by the states!** Two **trade associations**, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) together formed the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) in 2009. These trade associations are unelected associations based in Washington D.C.

In „spring 2009, 48 states signed a Memorandum of Agreement committing to voluntary participation in a process leading to adoption of the CCSS. „In September 2009, a draft of College and Career Readiness Standards was released. In March 2010, the first and only public draft of the K-12 Common Core State Standards for ELA and Math were released. In June 2010, the final K-12 Common Core State Standards were released.

It’s important to point out that **there were no Governors, State Superintendents of Schools, or State Legislators actively involved in the process of creating the Common Core State Standards.** There were also no state administrative or legislative staff involved in creating the

standards. The role of state governments was literally restricted to signing onto the standards created by the two trade associations, the NGA and the CCSSO. Many of the states that did sign onto Common Core State Standards did so to receive waivers to No Child Left Behind requirements or to qualify for Race To The Top money. They were literally bribed into signing onto the standards before they were even drafted.

This entry was posted in [What Is Common Core?](#) on [April 13, 2013](#) by [Jeffrey Horn](#).

<http://truthinamericaneducation.com/common-core-state-standards/myths-verses-facts/>

Myth. Common Core (CC) was a state-led initiative.

Fact. The CC standards were initiated by private interests in Washington, DC, without any representation from the states. Eventually the creators realized the need to present a façade of state involvement and therefore enlisted the National Governors Association (NGA) (a trade association that doesn't include all governors) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), another DC-based trade association. Neither of these groups had a grant of authority from any particular state or states to write the standards. The bulk of the creative work was done by Achieve, Inc., a DC-based nonprofit that includes many progressive education reformers who have been advocating national standards and curriculum for decades. Massive funding for all this came from private interests such as the Gates Foundation.

Myth. The federal government is not involved in the Common Core scheme.

Fact. The US Department of Education (USED) was deeply involved in the meetings that led to creation of Common Core. Moreover, it has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into the two consortia that are creating the national tests that will align with CC. USED is acting as the enforcer to herd states into the scheme (see next myth).

Myth. States that adopted CC did so voluntarily, without federal coercion.

Fact. Most states that adopted CC did so to be eligible to compete for federal Race to the Top funding. To have a chance at that money, recession-racked states agreed to adopt the CC standards and the aligned national tests sight unseen. In addition, the Obama Administration tied No Child Left Behind waivers to CC adoption, making it very difficult for a state to obtain a waiver without agreeing to accept CC.

Myth. Under Common Core, the states will still control their standards.

Fact. A state that adopts CC must accept the standards word for word. It may not change or delete anything, and may allow only a small amount of additional content (which won't be covered on the national tests).

Myth. Common Core is only a set of standards, not curriculum; states will still control their curriculum.

Fact. The point of standards is to drive curriculum. Ultimately, all the CC states will be teaching pretty much the same curriculum. In fact, the testing consortia being funded by USED admitted in their grant applications that they would use the money to develop curriculum models.

Myth. The Common Core standards are rigorous and will make our children “college-ready.”

Fact. Even the Fordham Institute, a proponent of CC, admits that several states had standards superior to CC and that many states had standards at least as good. CC has been described as a “race to the middle.” And as admitted by one drafter of the CC math standards, CC is designed to prepare students for a nonselective two-year community college, not a four-year university.

The only mathematician on the CC Validation Committee said that the CC math standards will place our students about two years behind their counterparts in high-performing countries. An expert in English education said that CC’s English language arts standards consist of “empty skill sets . . . [that] weaken the basis of literary and cultural knowledge needed for authentic college coursework.” She also suspects from her analysis of work done so far on the standards that the reading level deemed sufficient for high-school graduation will be at about the 7th-grade level. And CC revamps the American model of classical education to resemble a European model, which de-emphasizes the study of creative literature and places students on “tracks” (college vs. vocational) at an early age.

Myth. The Common Core standards are “internationally benchmarked.”

Fact. No information was presented to the Validation Committee to show how CC stacked up against standards of other high-achieving countries. In fact, the CC establishment no longer claims that the standards are “internationally benchmarked” – the website now states that they are “informed by” the standards of other countries. There is no definition of “informed by.”

Myth. We need common standards to be able to compare our students’ performance to that of students in other states.

Fact. If we want to do that, we already can. In the elementary/middle school years we have the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test; in high school we have the SAT and ACT.

Myth. We need common standards to help students who move from state to state.

Fact. The percentage of students who fit that description is vanishingly small (much less than 2%); most families move, if at all, within states, not to other states. It is

nonsensical to bind our entire education system in a straightjacket to benefit such a small number of students.

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Information on the tracking and loss of children's privacy can be found on the following web site:

<http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/education/item/15213-data-mining-students-through-common-core>

“Parents might reasonably assume that the “personally identifiable information” collected for the database will include students' test scores and perhaps other measures of academic proficiency. But they would be much less likely to imagine that the federal government envisions something far more extensive and invasive than merely tracking academic performance. According to the Department of Education's February 2013 report *Promoting Grit, Tenacity, and Perseverance: Critical Factors for Success in the 21st Century*, “Researchers are exploring how to gather *complex affective data* and generate meaningful and usable information to feed back to learners, teachers, researchers, and the technology itself. Connections to neuroscience are also beginning to emerge.” (Emphasis added.)

So far, nine states across the country have already agreed to adopt the data mining process, with parents having no say in this decision. Schools in New York, Delaware, Colorado, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Illinois, Louisiana, Georgia, and North Carolina have committed to “pilot testing” and information dissemination via sending students' personal information to a

database managed by inBloom, Inc., a private organization funded largely by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

This digital warehouse boasts on its website that it "partners with education technology companies, content providers and developers to support the creation of products compatible with this infrastructure." Presumably this means information sharing. On the "faq" page of the website, one of the questions is: "Will inBloom give away or sell confidential student and teacher data to private companies or organizations?" Revealingly, though the first word of inBloom's paragraph-long answer is "No," the rest of the answer indicates otherwise by acknowledging that "districts who use inBloom in conjunction with commercial applications and services may choose to disclose certain student information to those third-party providers." In other words, as long as the school districts consent, inBloom can share student data with whichever companies they choose.

The fact that Common Core Standards require children's personal information to be provided to a database that can be expected to sell or share the data to unspecified companies is worrisome to many parents and educators. "It leads to total control and total tracking of the child," said Mary Black, curriculum director for Freedom Project Education, an organization that provides classical K-12 online schooling. "It completely strips the child of his or her own privacy."

<http://www.utahnsagainstcommoncore.com/teacher-writes-legislator-after-retiring-due-to-common-core/>

This is a letter written by a teacher who retired as a result of the new common core state standards.

Senator Aaron Osmond

South Jordan, Utah 84095

Dear Aaron,

... On March 21, 2013, I was asked to return to the elementary school from which I retired last June, to give a presentation at their Literacy Night. Some of the parents and students I taught in the past came down to the room where I was to say hello. In the course of the conversation, a mother of one of the smartest and most conscientious students I have ever had, said that her daughter was struggling in math.

I was surprised, but told her mother that **teachers are required to teach to a rigid schedule and must move on to the next unit of study, even if the students don't understand it.**

Sticking to the schedule is more important than spending the time making sure everyone understands.

I knew as a teacher what I didn't like about Common Core, as well as what had taken place leading up to it, but I didn't have any concrete facts; therefore, I couldn't give the parents any verifiable information other than my own story. I have spent the last five weeks researching and learning about Common Core. There are so many facets to Common Core, and I still don't know everything, but I know much more than I did five weeks ago and enough to know that even without my own experience, I could not support it.

This morning I saw the e-mail from Diana Suddreth, the STEM Coordinator at the USOE, **asking the Curriculum Director in each school district in Utah to solicit "success stories" from teachers** using Common Core standards. She has further stated in her e-mail that she has seen marvelous and exciting things happening in classrooms since the implementation of Common Core. She stated that these "success stories" are needed to counteract the "vicious attacks" by those opposed to Common Core.

Aaron, are you aware that you and Senator Weiler are named by Diana Suddreth as *the only two legislators to contact* with the Common Core "success stories"? Am I to understand that you and Senator Weiler are therefore supportive of the Common Core Standards for the State of Utah? If you are, I find this confusing since **you have spoken so often of the important principle of local and State control of education. Common Core takes away local and State control, and puts the control into the hands of the Federal Government.**

My response to Diana Suddreth is:

1. Utah has always had standards which teachers were required to follow. 2. It is not a matter of “voila” Common Core is here and at long last, wonderful things are happening in classrooms! Exciting and wonderful things happen in classrooms **because of the teacher’s own hard work and creativity along with the freedom to decide how to best teach the standards that make for success in the classroom, NOT because a list of Federally mandated Common Core standards.** 3. **Tax payers asking legitimate questions of elected officials and those employed at the USOE, and having the expectation of them to have studied the issues more carefully than the people asking the questions “is not too much to ask”. Asking questions is not a “vicious attack”.** This is the future of our children’s education at stake as well as millions of taxpayer dollars.

Here is my unsolicited “success” story about Common Core:

Please note that I am speaking only to what is happening in the **Canyons School District and at the elementary level.** And I am speaking out because I am retired. **Those teachers in the school system are afraid of losing their jobs if they speak out against Common Core and against the policies of the District.**

The teachers have been given a rigid schedule which MUST be followed. In the morning, there is to be three hours of reading and language arts followed in the afternoon by two hours of math. P.E. and computer time has been shortened from 45 minutes to 30 minutes once a week. That leaves 15 minutes of time each day for *one* of the following: music, art, science and social studies.

The teachers are monitored regularly by the principal, reading specialist and district personnel to make sure they are following the schedule.

Last year, when I was still teaching, the math portion of Common Core was put into place with the District’s purchase of the Pearson-Scott Foresman math series. As of last year, **the “curriculum map” or math schedule did not match the organization of the book.** So every night, I had to hunt, using many sources, for what I was to teach the next day in order to follow the curriculum map. This is still the case as of this year.

We were to teach certain concepts during specified blocks of time and sometimes these **concepts had no relationship to each other.** After the specified blocks of time are completed, the students are tested in the computer lab, mainly so that the district can make sure the teachers are following the schedule. **Even if the students do not understand the concepts being taught, the teacher must move on to the next block in order to follow the mandated schedule.**

This removes the teacher’s ability to teach according to the needs of her/his particular class. One of the basic tenants of teaching is: **monitor and then adjust to the needs of your students.** The schedule as required by the District makes this very **difficult** to do.

We skim over the surface of many concepts. **If you have seen any of the ridiculous examples of teaching two-digit multiplication and addition that people have posted on Facebook, yes, I have taught this because it is on the test.**

I was in the classroom through the time leading up to the implementation of Common Core, as math was being “dumbed down” and during the time when **we were told not to teach multiplication facts, two and three digit multiplication and long division to fourth graders.** How could any respectable teacher not teach this? This is not the case at the present time (times tables and long division and two and three digit multiplication are again being taught); however, **the time allotted to teach these concepts is not long enough for many kids to grasp the idea.**

My ability to be an effective math teacher was GREATLY diminished by having to follow the Common Core standards.

For this current school year, Canyons District purchased the Pearson reading series, “Reading Street” to match up with Common Core. **(A perfectly good reading series which was not worn out was discarded. Why couldn’t this discarded series just have been supplemented with additional materials instead of wasting taxpayer money on new books?)**

Reading and language arts, as in math, requires **strict adherence to the schedule with regular monitoring by the principal, reading specialist and district personnel.**

The students have 8 math and 6 reading computerized tests as well as three oral reading tests administered by the district. The upper grades have an additional test called MAZE. This does not count the end of the year testing in the computer lab. After the results are back the teacher is called into the principal’s office, along with the reading specialist, to account for the scores.

These tests are in addition to the regular weekly spelling, reading and math tests from the book publisher and teacher for the report card grades.

Speaking of report cards, we were told last year that the District was going to have workshops for parents so that they could understand the new report card which was going to be aligned with the Common Core standards. Wouldn’t the necessity of needing a workshop to teach parents how to interpret an elementary school report card, tell the District that this was a bad idea?

The lower performing students have just plain given up with this constant testing and will not even try any more. Teachers report that some of their students’ scores are actually getting worse. And again, teachers are called into the principal’s office to be grilled about what the teacher is going to do to bring up the scores, so that EVERY student is meeting the required benchmarks, when they are already doing everything they can to teach the material. Apparently, a child’s developmental readiness or ability is not taken in to consideration.

Is the child’s or teacher’s value only a test score?

The pressure on the teachers from the administration is INTENSE and many teachers say all they can do is teach to the test.

A second grade teacher recounted that she didn't even dare have her class color a shamrock on St. Patrick's Day because of the constant micromanaging by the administration and **coloring a shamrock is not on the schedule.**

Many teachers are saying they just can't do this anymore. **The joy and creativity of teaching in elementary school has been taken away by Common Core and the excessive testing. Kids and teachers both are burning out. Is this really what we want for our children?**

Because of Common Core our freedom is being lost even down to the lowest level: the classroom.

There are MANY reasons to oppose Common Core. Here are just a few:

1. Data and assessment driven. 2. Adopted by the State School Board by accepting stimulus money and agreeing to the Common core standards before they had even been written. 3. Family rights to privacy, as spelled out in FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), have been essentially amended **making computer testing a major tool in gathering information about students that should remain private. This is known as Data Mining.** 4. Adopting these standards takes decision making out of State and local school boards and districts, but, even more importantly, out of the hands of teachers and parents. 5. The State Legislature was bypassed by not being included in the decision of whether or not to adopt Common Core.

There are so many layers to Common Core. **There is much more involved here, than just a list of standards.** My experience is just one part, but an important part. **Frankly, it seems to me that if all the facts were known, it would be *more than obvious* that the legislature would make the move to abandon Common Core.**

I am not against Common Core because I have been around for SO long that I don't want change, but because **I can see the harm it is doing to my profession and to students. The freedom of the parents, teachers, school districts and states to choose what is best for them has been taken away and will be controlled by the Federal government.**

May I recommend to you a video presentation explaining Common Core that has been posted on You Tube. It is one of the best presentations I have seen. If you type in Google "[You Tube Subversive Threat to Education](#)", you should be able to find it. It is a current talk given to a group in Tennessee.

Thank you again for all the hours of service you give to our community and State.

Sincerely,

Margaret Wilkin

<http://heartland.org/policy-documents/research-commentary-common-core-science-standards>

Research & Commentary: Common Core Science Standards

Joy Pullmann –

April 16, 2013

- Heartland Institute

A consortium of consultants and science educators has released its final draft of what it plans will become national education standards for K-12 science. They are titled Next Generation Science Standards but are also Common Core science standards because created by the same groups and designed to fit with Common Core math.

Forty-five states already have adopted math and language arts Common Core standards, grade-by-grade lists of what each student must know to be deemed proficient by the government in each subject. Most states rushed to adopt them in 2009 and 2010 because the federal government required them to do so for a better chance at winning a Race to the Top stimulus grant.

Common Core proponents say their nearly national spread allows families to move between states and maintain curricular stability and allows comparisons of student achievement across states using the same measures. It also prevents states from degrading their standards, since they no longer control them. Clear, uniform, high-quality standards are necessary to create the proper expectations for schools and teachers to aim at.

Individual liberty advocates counter that centralization in education is as foolish and damaging as centralizing the economy. They note the ideological tendencies of science education toward politics as a substitute for actual science, particularly in the area of highly debatable global warming alarmism, which is falsely assumed as reality in these standards. The standards also promote a simplified understanding of science and are still incoherent despite revisions, according to several sets of reviewers. They ignore central scientific concepts and push a progressive teaching style that has been proven to erode student learning, especially for disadvantaged students.

The following documents offer more information about the Common Core science standards.

Climate Change Science Poised to Enter Nation's Classrooms

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-03-04/climate-change-science-poised-to-enter-nation-s-classrooms.html>

New national science standards firmly embed global warming in the public school curriculum and are likely to curtail climate-alarm skepticism among students, reports *Bloomberg Businessweek*. Major textbook publishers expect some 40 states to adopt the standards. They are already incorporating into science curricula the standards' emphasis on manmade environmental dangers, so states that don't adopt the standards will likely end up using the Common Core science curriculum anyway..

Chemistry, Physics, Biology Groups Respond to Science Standards

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/02/feedback_on_common_science_sta.html

Although the Common Core draft science standards have improved, science teachers and organizations say, many weaknesses remain, *Education Week* reports. This includes a lack of math content and specificity, missing chemistry concepts, and extremely unwieldy language. Many people interviewed worried most elementary teachers cannot handle the science emphasis, as many do not have a strong science background.

Science Standards 2.0

<http://www.edexcellence.net/commentary/education-gadfly-daily/common-core-watch/2013/science-standards-2.html>

The second draft of Common Core science standards is “ambitious, but seriously troubled,” write pro-Common Core Fordham Institute researchers Chester Finn Jr. and Kathleen Porter-Magee. The standards as currently written would lower states’ already awful science standards, the pair writes. The draft ignores essential science content, expects kids to know things in later grades it hadn’t required teachers to teach in early grades, emphasizes habits and activities rather than actual knowledge, and dumbs down essential, science-related math. In short, the draft standards’ bad qualities outweigh the good.

A Science Teacher’s View: The Backward-Engineered Common Core Science Standards

<http://nepc.colorado.edu/blog/chemtchr-science-teachers-view-backward-engineered-common-core-science-standards>

A teacher who worked on her state’s science standards with the Common Core brigade explains how the process shortchanged learning in favor of creating lists of testing items. The standards aim to teach children a disconnected collection of things to memorize for state tests rather than a cohesive understanding of science and the world. She concludes the science standards would damage science education in the United States.

States Soon to Weigh Science-Standards Adoption

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/01/30/19science.h32.html>

The number of states likely to adopt Common Core science standards after they are published in March 2013 is above 30, reports *Education Week’s* Erik Robelen. States will likely adopt them using their “normal protocols” rather than lightning speed, which happened with the math and English standards because the federal government pushed those through grants. The standards cement evolution and human-caused global warming as central topics for K-12 students, which some state officials said will make them controversial. Even states that don’t adopt the standards will probably use a “bastardized version” of Core-aligned textbooks, and nearly all teachers will be trained in them because of their reach, says Rick Hess of the American Enterprise Institute.

Whose Next Generation of Science Standards?

<http://www.artofteachingscience.org/2013/01/18/generation-science-standards/>

This article reviews the history of science standards in the United States and discusses the background of the Common Core science standards. Its author, Jack Hassard, argues the standards represent a cadre of elites pushing their agenda on the rest of the country.

Public School Science Standards: Political or Pure?

<http://www.cornwallalliance.org/articles/read/science-standards-political-or-pure/>

In this lecture at the 24th Annual Educational Policy Conference of the Constitutional Coalition in St. Louis, Dr. E. Calvin Beisner lists three major concerns he has over how the forthcoming Common Core science standards treat evolution and climate change. He says the standards are not neutral toward religion, which will lead to indoctrination, not education; fail to distinguish historical from experimental science; and fail to distinguish for students the various definitions of evolution, leading them to assume the word always denotes the same thing. The standards typify “post-normal” science — that is, the promotion of a political agenda under the guise of objective science, Beisner says.

Response of Citizens for Objective Public Education, Inc. (COPE) to 2012 Draft of National Science Education Standards

<http://heartland.org/policy-documents/response-citizens-objective-public-education-inc-cope-2012-draft-national-science-e>

The Common Core science standards address religious questions, then provide atheistic/materialistic explanations rather than more appropriate religiously neutral explanations, write the leaders of Citizens for Objective Public Education in their critique of the standards. The standards promote a religion courts have defined as secular humanism, which leads children to accept only empirical knowledge, whereas other disciplines teach there are many different ways of knowing. The standards also make no distinction between historical and experimental science, exclude religious groups from their diversity requirements, and make no attempt to comply with First Amendment protections of freedom of speech and religion. The standards abandon the scientific method and convert science into an enterprise that rules by alleged consensus, which then purports to speak for all scientists. This seems to convert science from an enterprise that investigates into one that seeks to make social policy.

Next Generation Science Standards Fall Flat

<http://etcjournal.com/2013/01/22/next-generation-science-standards-fall-flat/>

Common Core draft science standards do not include chemistry as a separate subject but instead distribute it throughout other subjects. In so doing, the standards drop essential science content, writes former chemistry professor and science editor Harry Keller. The standards also fail to require any chemistry labs, which is odd given their focus on experiential learning, and entirely distort the point of science, which is learning from tested experience. Its format pushes a teaching method similar to that of the failed 1940s progressive science that focused not on learning but on the “social, personal, and vocational needs of the student,” he writes.

Commentary & Feedback on Draft II of the Next Generation Science Standards

<http://heartland.org/policy-documents/commentary-feedback-draft-ii-next-generation-science-standards>

Scientists, mathematicians, and curriculum experts reviewing the second Common Core draft science standards conclude they are vague, omit large sections of crucial content, and emphasize failed progressive pedagogy over the actual science knowledge students need. The authors give examples of the many crucial omissions, such as acids and bases in chemistry. They believe the standards would burden and confuse teachers rather than providing a useful, clear framework for teaching what students should learn in science classes. The standards confusingly expand ineffective ways of learning science and compress the actual knowledge essential for student success, the authors conclude.

<http://americanprinciplesproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Controlling-Education-From-the-Top.pdf>

The information found on the above page is too extensive to copy in full refer to the site to view the document.

<http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/education/item/15213-data-mining-students-through-common-core>

Awareness is growing rapidly about the recent initiative to bring Common Core Standards to schools across America. Although the standards were supposedly proposed by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) — giving the illusion that the agenda is “state-led,” it was the federal government that endorsed the plan by offering \$4 billion in grant money through Obama’s Race to the Top program to cooperating states. Representative Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-Mo.) recently decided to take action and write a letter to U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan and is currently seeking co-signers from congressional colleagues. Congressman Luetkemeyer addressed several issues of concern with Common Core — and in the last half of his letter he emphasized the crux of the problem: data mining.

“We understand that as a condition of applying for [Race to the Top] grant funding, states obligated themselves to implement a State Longitudinal Database System (SLDS) used to track students by obtaining personally identifiable information,” Luetkemeyer said. “We formally request a detailed description of each change to student privacy policy that has been made under your leadership, including the need and intended purpose for such changes.”

Parents might reasonably assume that the “personally identifiable information” collected for the database will include students’ test scores and perhaps other measures of academic proficiency. But they would be much less likely to imagine that the federal government envisions something far more extensive and invasive than merely tracking academic performance. According to the Department of Education’s February 2013 report *Promoting Grit, Tenacity,*

and Perseverance: Critical Factors for Success in the 21st Century, "Researchers are exploring how to gather *complex affective data* and generate meaningful and usable information to feed back to learners, teachers, researchers, and the technology itself. Connections to neuroscience are also beginning to emerge." (Emphasis added.)

So far, nine states across the country have already agreed to adopt the data mining process, with parents having no say in this decision. Schools in New York, Delaware, Colorado, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Illinois, Louisiana, Georgia, and North Carolina have committed to "pilot testing" and information dissemination via sending students' personal information to a database managed by inBloom, Inc., a private organization funded largely by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

This digital warehouse boasts on its website that it "partners with education technology companies, content providers and developers to support the creation of products compatible with this infrastructure." Presumably this means information sharing. On the "faq" page of the website, one of the questions is: "Will inBloom give away or sell confidential student and teacher data to private companies or organizations?" Revealingly, though the first word of inBloom's paragraph-long answer is "No," the rest of the answer indicates otherwise by acknowledging that "districts who use inBloom in conjunction with commercial applications and services may choose to disclose certain student information to those third-party providers." In other words, as long as the school districts consent, inBloom can share student data with whichever companies they choose.

The fact that Common Core Standards require children's personal information to be provided to a database that can be expected to sell or share the data to unspecified companies is worrisome to many parents and educators. "It leads to total control and total tracking of the child," said Mary Black, curriculum director for Freedom Project Education, an organization that provides classical K-12 online schooling. "It completely strips the child of his or her own privacy."

Schools will not only collect objective facts about students but gain a more intimate knowledge as well — even profiles of students' attitudes and predictions of their futures that could then be used by the schools to shape outcomes. The DOE released a brief in October 2012 entitled "Enhancing, Teaching and Learning Through Educational Data Mining and Learning Analytics," in which the following was stated about data mining procedures:

A student learning database (or other big data repository) stores time-stamped student input and behaviors captured as students work within the system. A predictive model combines demographic data (from an external student information system) and learning/behavior data from the student learning database to track a student's progress and make predictions about his or her future behaviors or performance, such as future course outcomes and dropouts.

Within the February report, the DOE displayed photographs of the actual technology that will be used on students, if the department's plan is fully implemented. What they call the "four parallel streams of affective sensors" will be employed to effectively "measure" each child. The "facial expression camera," for instance, "is a device that can be used to detect emotion.... The camera captures facial expressions, and software on the laptop extracts geometric properties on faces." Other devices, such as the "posture analysis seat," "pressure mouse," and "wireless skin conductance sensor," which looks like a wide, black bracelet strapped to a child's wrist, are all designed to collect

“physiological response data from a biofeedback apparatus that measures blood volume, pulse, and galvanic skin response to examine student frustration.”

In an attempt to assuage such fears regarding students' privacy, the February report stated the following:

Privacy is always a concern, especially when leveraging data available in the “cloud” that users may or may not be aware is being mined. However, another emergent concern is the consequences of using new types of personal data in new ways. Learners and educators have the potential to get forms of feedback about their behaviors, emotions, physiological responses, and cognitive processes that have never been available before. Measurement developers must carefully consider the impacts of releasing such data, sometimes of a sensitive nature.

Even when using their most eloquent language to sell us the product, the DOE's explanation is more disturbing than comforting. They openly admit that students under Common Core will be poked and prodded for information of a “sensitive nature.” But what specifically is this information?

In 2010, the National Center for Education Statistics released a technical brief about “Guidance for Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS),” which formulated a detailed plan for “data stewardship” in education. The SLDS created a grant program in 2005, each grant lasting three to five years at up to \$20 million per grantee. In 2012, a combination of 24 states and territories struck a deal to implement data mining to receive grants. “Personally Identifiable Information” will be extracted from each student, which will include the following data: parents' names, address, Social Security Number, date of birth, place of birth, mother's maiden name, etc. On the other hand, according to the SLDS brief, “Sensitive Information” will also be extracted, which delves into the intimate details of students' lives:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or parent;
2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent; or
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

It is unclear whether students will be required to answer the aforementioned questions while being analyzed by the four kinds of “sensors” promoted by the DOE report, but all students will be subjected to questioning. Although the

SLDS claims that this particular information “requires written parental consent” before a minor is forced to disclose it, loopholes still exist that could circumvent parental authority. “I think they would get around parental consent through testing,” Black explained. She warned *The New American* that academic exams — regardless of the subject — could potentially be utilized to extract this information without parents knowing. Black asserted that, even if parents could truly opt out and save their children from having to answer such personal questions, the children might be “branded” — permanently placing them into a different category from the other students.

Armed with knowledge, citizens are beginning to see the red flags within the wordy explanations from the authorities on Common Core. If Americans want freedom for their children and grandchildren, they must take a stand before it is too late. By the 2014-2015 school year, all schools will start testing at the national level, using Common Core Standards. “We need to be working with our state legislators and fight it at the state level,” Black said. “This is about something most near and dear to people — their children.” They are worth the fight!

<http://beverlyeakman.com/index.php/about-bev>

Below is a bio of a teacher who I referenced in point 12. She has many books out which offer advice on how to protect children from data-trafficking in education.

Quick Overview Bio

Beverly K. Eakman’s 8th book, *PUSH BACK! How to Take a Stand Against Groupthink, Bullies, Agitators and Professional Manipulators* (Skyhorse Publishing), has an expected release date of January 2014. Mrs. Eakman began her career as a teacher, left to become a scientific writer for a NASA contractor, and went on to serve as a speechwriter for the head of the Voice of America and for the chairman (a former U.S. Supreme Court Justice) of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. She was a writer for the U.S. Dept. of Justice before retiring from federal government. Her first book in 1991 blew the whistle on misrepresented standardized testing of schoolchildren. She specializes in covering education policy, mental-health fraud, data-trafficking, privacy and political agitation strategies.

INTRODUCTORY BIO: BEVERLY K. EAKMAN

- Educator, 9 years: English, Literature, Debate; 7th grade remedial through 12th grade AP students, 1968–1974 (CA), 1979–1981 (TX). Wrote English grammar curriculum for foreign students. (B.S. in education, Texas Tech Univ. (1968); graduate work: Univ. of Calif., Irvine and Univ. of Houston.)

- Science & Technical Writer/Editor-in-Chief of NASA's official newspaper, 1974–1979. Biggest feature: "David the Bubble Baby," a behind-the-scenes look at space technology in medicine.
- Chief speechwriter for: Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, Commission on the Bicentennial of the US Constitution, 1986–87; Director, Voice of America, 1987–89. Writer: U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1991–2004.
- Author: most recent release, *Agenda Games* (2012); 8 other books since 1991, inc. the internationally acclaimed *Cloning of the American Mind: Eradicating Morality Through Education* (1998). Op-Ed Columnist: American Daily Herald, *American Opinion*, *NewsWithViews*, *WorldNetDaily*, *The Washington Post* and more.
- Feature-length articles: *Education Week*, *Chronicles Magazine*, *The Washington Times*, *InsightMagazine*, *National Review*, *The New American*, *Crisis Magazine*.
- Executive Director 1994–2006: National Education Consortium (specializing in education & privacy law).
- Personal: Married 45 years to David Eakman, an aerospace engineer/scientist.