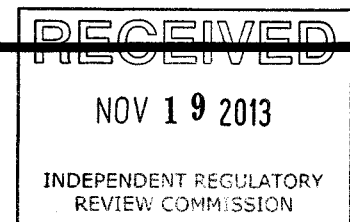


Cooper, Kathy

From: Michele Jansen <mjansenbehta@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 9:55 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Public Comments for 11/21/13 meeting



The sad thing about being here today for me and all the others here is that this is not the fight we wanted to fight. The fight we wanted to be in would have happened three years ago when the Common Core State Standards were adopted and approved. And if I had been informed, if I had understood what was going on, if my legislators had understood what was going on three years ago, we could have had that honest discussion. But instead I am here today stuck between a rock and hard place because we are left to make a choice between two bad choices.

Either we leave the Common Core State standards adopted in 2010 with all the problems that have come to light only in the past year when they finally truly were open to criticism and debate and broad analysis, or we accept the proposed Chapter 4 revisions which are virtually the same and continue with most of the same problems. While they do address some concerns related to more local control and issues with assessments and the way they will be applied to students and school evaluations which I do recognize are positive and thank the PDE and Board for doing that, they don't go nearly far enough to address the problems and failings we now understand. The sad fact is that most of these problems were only brought to light since the adoption of the revisions in March of this year. The slight tweaks made since March did not come close to fixing these issues.

The argument made to the legislature and I am sure to the IRRC is that if you don't approve these revisions today you will negate all of those changes that PDE and the State Board have done since adopting Common Core and that Pennsylvania school districts and students will be left with a more burdensome system. But if approved my fear is that might be used as the excuse not to make the big change we need in light of the exposure of all the flaws in this new reform that we found out about too late to keep from being down the road we are on. We need to get off this road and approving these revisions might take away, in some peoples mind, the urgency to do this as soon as possible.

The fight all of us protesting here know, regardless of your decision today, must now be taken to our elected representatives who do have the power to reverse this education reform and we are planning to do so. It must be taken to our local school districts where we must be very vigilant about the new aligned curriculum being offered to our schools and where we must be very vigilant about the way children are being taught, about the impact on their wellbeing and results we are seeing. And we must support our teachers, superintendents, principles and other school employees to be aware of the effects of this new reform on them and let them know we want to cooperate and help them fight when they see the way they would like to teach being interfered with.

I thank you for listening to my concerns today,

Dr. Michele Jansen
Franklin County Pa