

2976

November 18, 2013

Mr. David Sumner  
Executive Director, IRRRC  
333 Market Street, 14th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101



Subject: a.) Resolution, Coatesville Area School District, Coatesville PA OPPOSES  
PA Core Standards (see Addendum)  
b.) Alternative to PA Core Standards

Reference: IRRRC #2976

Dear Mr. Sumner;

Allow me to present a resolution which was unanimously passed on 12 November 2013 by the Coatesville Area School District opposing PA Core Standards.

After months reviewing the proposed PA Core and federal Common Core Standards, the board and school's Superintendent decided to formerly oppose PA Core Standards. Many of the teachers and parents, along with area residents, I have spoken with have expressed their concerns with implementing either set of standards due to, among other issues, the increasing amount of paperwork, a blotted educational bureaucracy and a continuing loss of local control.

Paraphrasing our Superintendent's words - we need more GOOD teachers! But, instead, we see the onset of more bureaucracy, increasing paperwork, more cost (yet undefined) and procedurally how to implement student remediation.

We as the concerned citizens of Coatesville, share both the board and Superintendent's concerns and support their proactive position in passing the resolution to oppose PA Core Standards.

When speaking to community residents and interest groups about Common Core I am often asked, being against Common Core, what is your alternative to what educator's and/or the state board authority recommends? My answer is quite simple this:

My generation is the product of public education without Common Core Standards or its derivative or significant government intrusion. I attended public schools from the late 1940's through 1962. I am a college graduate with multiple engineering degrees and have worked in the private aerospace and defense industries for over 45 years. What has my generation and those of preceding generations contributed to the legacy of our country? The specifics are too numerous to state in this venue but MOST everything that surrounds us today had its birth prior to 1980 in form of research, development,

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design and production. I am referencing industrial and medical technologies, consumer goods and appliances, electronics, communications, computers and media, to name a few. These industries and technologies were embraced by those men and women who had dreams and ambitions and a purpose to expand their creativity. All this without Common Core or its derivative. The cost per student for my generation's education ... far less expensive than today's cost or projected costs with Common Core. We were taught by teachers who inspired and made attending school interesting rather than facilitators who will broadcast lesson plans to a predetermined script. We graduated free thinkers with unbounded limits. Common Core and its derivative will graduate widgets and robots constrained in thought, bound by agenda, and compliant to status quo.

If the PA Department of Education seeks to improve student performance and raise our national standing among the industrial countries of the world, why did they not consider the proven success of the educational model of a generation ago?

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard A. Felice".

Richard A. Felice  
Coatesville, PA

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**The Coatesville Area School District  
Coatesville, PA 19320**

**Resolution Opposing Pennsylvania Common Core State Standards Initiative**

November 2013

**Whereas**, a solid education of children is the responsibility of the parents, supported by the locally elected Board of School Directors of the Coatesville Area School District based on a strong foundation of accountability and transparency, that is built by open communication about the policies, programs, curriculum and the funding of these education processes; and,

**Whereas**, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative is an unproven experimental set of national standards lacking empirical data to support them, that are still in the early stages of development, and local school board members, school leaders, teachers and most importantly parents were not included in the discussion, evaluation and preparation of the Common Core; and,

**Whereas**, through a collaboration between two non-governmental organizations, National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, both of which are Washington D.C. based associations with zero grant of legislative authority from states to draft national standards; and,

**Whereas**, the Common Core State Standard Initiative binds us to an established copyright over standards, from which we cannot delete, replace or add beyond an additional 15% even if parents, teachers, and the local school board all agree, ignoring academic freedom, teacher autonomy, stifling creativity and innovation, eliminating a laboratory environment & best practices; and,

**Whereas**, the General Educational Provisions Act prohibits federal authority over curriculum and testing; however, in the view of some, the U.S. Department of Education's Cooperative Agreement potentially implies Common Core's test-building and data collection is federally managed; and,

**Whereas**, Common Core State Standards Initiative incentivized states to adopt the standards, even before they were written, and tied financial incentives to "Race to the Top" such that if States did not adopt the Common Core Standards, they faced penalties and loss of funds; and,

**Whereas**, the federal government is imposing an unfunded mandate on our state for unproven Pennsylvania Common Core instruction, training, and testing platforms without any pledge of financial support from federal, state or local government; and,

**Whereas**, neither the Pennsylvania Secretary of Education nor the Governor of Pennsylvania are authorized by the Pennsylvania State Constitution to change public education

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standards and curricula without prior passage of legislation in the Pennsylvania General Assembly whose mandated responsibility in Article III, Section 14 is "to provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth" but which has delegated degrees of that responsibility to the State Board of Education to which the Governor of Pennsylvania has appointing authority and of which the Secretary of Education serves as Chief Executive Officer; and,

**Whereas**, the CCSS requires collection and sharing of massive amounts of personal student and teacher data creating a risk of privacy breach;

**NOW, THEREFORE** be it:

**RESOLVED**, that the Coatesville Area School District does not subscribe to a one size fits all top down approach to education and recognizes that CCSS is an inappropriate overreach of untested, experimental education standards that are not developed from results based evidence on their efficacy nor on demonstrated best practices;

**RESOLVED**, that the Coatesville Area School District rejects the collection of personal student data for any non-educational purpose without the prior written consent of a parent; and

**RESOLVED**, That the Board of School Directors of the Coatesville Area School District hereby officially advises the State Board of Education, the Pennsylvania Secretary of Education, the Governor of Pennsylvania, the Senate and House of Representatives' Education Committees and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission that it opposes the Pennsylvania Common Core Standard Initiative.

  
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J. Neil Campbell, Board President

  
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Ronald G. Kabonick, Board Secretary