

HR

9

<TARGET><BILL>HR 9</BILL><SUBJECT>HR
9</SUBJECT><COMM>HEDC28</COMM></TARGET>

CK
1/28/14

Alaska State Legislature
House of Representatives
Representative Tammie Wilson

Interim
1292 Sadler Way Ste. 304
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone - (907) 451-2723
Fax - (907) 452-3430



Session
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone - (907) 465-4797
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Rep.Tammie.Wilson@akleg.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Lynn Gattis, Chair, Education Committee

From: Representative Tammie Wilson

RE: Hearing Request for HR 9

Date: January 28, 2014

Dear Chair Gattis,

I respectfully request a hearing for HR 9 in the Education Committee.

My staff on this piece of legislation is Barbara Barnes. She can be reached at 465-4797.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tammie

Rep. Tammie Wilson

28-LS1224\N
Bullard
4/2/14

CS FOR HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 9()
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES TAMMIE WILSON, Stoltze, Gattis, Keller

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the commissioner of education and early development and the state Board of**
2 **Education and Early Development to evaluate and ensure that, in setting state education**
3 **performance standards, Alaska's sovereignty is maintained and that the standards of the**
4 **Common Core State Standards Initiative are not adopted as state education**
5 **performance standards.**

6 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

7 **WHEREAS** the state Board of Education and Early Development, not the legislature,
8 adopted new statewide education performance standards, described as college and career
9 readiness standards in English, language arts, and mathematics in June 2012; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in May 2013, the United States Department of Education granted to the
11 Department of Education and Early Development a flexibility waiver of specified provisions
12 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, that amended the Elementary and Secondary
13 Education Act, based in part on the college and career readiness standards; and

14 **WHEREAS** the college and career readiness standards have not been validated in the
15 state; and

1 **WHEREAS** unknown and significant costs are associated with implementation of the
2 Elementary and Secondary Education Act waiver; and

3 **WHEREAS** many school districts in the state lack the technology, infrastructure, and
4 funding to provide online testing aligned with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
5 waiver adopted by the Department of Education and Early Development; and

6 **WHEREAS** the state Board of Education and Early Development has not secured
7 funding for schools that need curricular, technological, and infrastructural modifications and
8 professional development as a result of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act waiver
9 agreement;

10 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives urges the commissioner of
11 education and early development and the state Board of Education and Early Development to
12 verify that the Alaska "college and career readiness standards" establish standards a secondary
13 school graduate must meet to obtain the requisite knowledge and skill to transition without
14 remediation to postsecondary education or training and, ultimately, into a sustainable career;
15 and be it

16 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives urges the commissioner
17 of education and early development and the state Board of Education and Early Development
18 to ensure that those educational standards meet national benchmarks for college and career
19 readiness, are aligned with postsecondary educational expectations, employ the highest
20 standards, maintain state sovereignty, and provide strict safeguards to protect the
21 confidentiality of student data; and be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives urges the state Board of
23 Education and Early Development to identify all improvements and adaptations necessary to
24 implement the Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility waiver and calculate the
25 related costs, including the expenses of curriculum alignment, technological improvements,
26 teacher preparation, and new standards-based assessments; and be it

27 **FURTHER RESOLVED** by the House of Representatives that neither the
28 Department of Education and Early Development nor the state Board of Education and Early
29 Development shall expend any money to implement the set of educational curriculum
30 standards for grades kindergarten through 12 established by the Common Core State
31 Standards Initiative; and be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** by the House of Representatives that, after June 30, 2014,
2 the state, or the state Board of Education and Early Development on behalf of the state, may
3 not enter into or renew an agreement with any organization, entity, group, or consortium that
4 requires the state to cede any measure of autonomy or control over state education standards
5 and assessments, including cut scores.

6 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Sean Parnell, Governor of
7 Alaska; the Honorable Mike Hanley, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early
8 Development; and the members of the state Board of Education and Early Development.

28-LS1224U
Mischel
3/18/14

CS FOR HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 9()
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES TAMMIE WILSON, Stoltze, Gattis, Keller, Reinbold

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the commissioner of education and early development and the state Board of**
2 **Education and Early Development to delay implementation of statewide education**
3 **standards.**

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

5 **WHEREAS** the state Board of Education and Early Development, not the legislature,
6 adopted new statewide education performance standards, described as college and career
7 readiness standards, in English and language arts and mathematics in June 2012; and

8 **WHEREAS**, in May 2013, the United States Department of Education granted to the
9 Department of Education and Early Development a flexibility waiver of specified provisions
10 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that amended the Elementary and Secondary
11 Education Act, based in part on the college and career readiness standards; and

12 **WHEREAS** the college and career readiness standards have not been tested in the
13 state; and

14 **WHEREAS** the college and career readiness standards substantively change the
15 educational standards for all students and teachers in the state; and

1 **WHEREAS** unknown and significant costs are associated with implementation of the
2 college and career readiness standards; and

3 **WHEREAS** many school districts in the state lack the technology, infrastructure, and
4 funding to provide online testing aligned with the college and career readiness standards
5 contemplated by the Department of Education and Early Development; and

6 **WHEREAS** the state Board of Education and Early Development has not secured
7 funding for schools that will require curricular, technological, and infrastructural
8 modifications and professional development as a result of the college and career readiness
9 standards;

10 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives urges the commissioner of
11 education and early development and the state Board of Education and Early Development to
12 delay full implementation of the college and career readiness standards until the state Board
13 of Education and Early Development identifies all related improvements and adaptations
14 necessary for implementation of the college and career readiness standards, including the
15 costs of curriculum alignment, technological improvement, teacher preparation, and new
16 standards-based assessment, and to provide a phase-in schedule for full implementation of the
17 new standards; and be it

18 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives requests that the state
19 Board of Education and Early Development collaborate with the Alaska State Legislature to
20 develop and implement a statewide transition plan to satisfy the requirements of the flexibility
21 waiver of specified provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that amended the
22 Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

23 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Sean Parnell, Governor of
24 Alaska; the Honorable Mike Hanley, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early
25 Development; and the members of the state Board of Education and Early Development.

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

BY REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS

TO: CSHR 9(), Draft Version "U"

1 Page 2, lines 12 - 13:

2 Delete "until the state Board of Education and Early Development identifies"

3 Insert "pending the determination by an independent third party under contract with

4 and under the supervision of the House Task Force on Sustainable Education of"

5

6 Page 2, line 16, following "assessment,":

7 Insert "and the receipt of that determination by the House Task Force on Sustainable

8 Education,"

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

BY REPRESENTATIVE GATTIS

TO: CSHR 9(), Draft Version "U"

- 1 Page 1, line 2, following "**delay**":
- 2 Insert "**the full**"

Alaska State Legislature
House of Representatives
Representative Tammie Wilson

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Rep.Tammie.Wilson@akleg.gov

House Resolution 9

SPONSOR STATEMENT

“Urging the commissioner of education and early development and the state Board of Education and Early Development to delay implementation of statewide education standards”

In the past year the state Board of Education has approved Alaska’s new English language arts and mathematics standards. These new standards could force districts to overhaul their existing curriculum to meet the more rigorous expectations. They have tied educator evaluations partly to student learning without additional teacher development. Rigorous assessments will also be implemented in the spring of 2015.

School Districts and the legislature have a right to understand the costs associated with implementation of the college and career readiness standards, including the costs of curriculum alignment, technological improvement, teacher preparation and the new standards-based assessments.

Therefore, the House of Representatives urges Commissioner Hanley and the state Board of Education and Early Development to delay implementation of the college and career readiness standards until a cost analysis associated with these changes can be done. The House of Representative also requests that the Board of Education and Early Development collaborate with the Alaska State Legislature to develop and implement a statewide transition plan to satisfy the requirements of the flexibility waiver.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2014 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Bill Version CSHR 9(EDC)
 Fiscal Note Number 1
 (H) Publish Date 4/7/2014

Identifier (file name) _____ Dept. Affected _____
 Title Delaying Implementation of State Standards Appropriation _____
 Allocation _____
 Sponsor Rep. Tammie Wilson
 Requester House Education Committee OMB Component Number _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	FY15 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY15 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
			FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY15	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
Personal Services							
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants, Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

FUND SOURCE		(Thousands of Dollars)					
1002	Federal Receipts						
1003	GF Match						
1004	GF						
1005	GF/Prgm (DGF)						
1007	I/A Rcpts (Other)						
1156	Rcpt Svcs (DGF)						
		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

POSITIONS							
Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

CHANGE IN REVENUES							

Estimated **SUPPLEMENTAL (FY14) operating costs** _____ (separate supplemental appropriation required)
 (discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated **CAPITAL (FY15) costs** _____ (separate capital appropriation required)
 (discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? _____
 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended, or repealed? _____ Discuss details in analysis section.

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version (if initial version, please note as such)

Prepared by Crystal Kennedy
 Division Committee Aide to House Education Committee/ Rep. Gattis
 Approved by Rep. Gattis/ Chair
 Division House Education Committee

Phone 465-4924
 Date/Time _____
 Date 4/7/2014

WorkKeys test taking tips

- There is no need to study or “cram” for WorkKeys assessments
- Bring a calculator for the Applied Mathematics assessment
- Listen to and read the directions for each test carefully
- Read each question carefully
- Be sure you understand what each question is asking
- Budget your time so you will be able to complete each test in the allotted time
- Answer the easy questions first
- Use logic in more difficult questions
- Answer every question because there is no penalty for guessing
- Review your work
- Take advantage of any break times to walk around a bit, relax, clear your head, and come back motivated to do your best on the next assessment

Sample test questions and practice tests are available at www.workkeys.com.



How to find out more

WorkKeys is developed by ACT, an international leader in educational testing and workforce development services for more than 40 years, best known for the ACT Assessment® college entrance exam. Thousands of companies and schools across the United States and internationally use WorkKeys.

For more information about WorkKeys, visit the ACT website at www.workkeys.com or contact your school.

ACT®

WorkKeys



Student and Parent Information

ACT®

What is WorkKeys®?

WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system measuring “real world” skills that employers believe are critical to job success. These skills are valuable for any occupation you are considering and at any level of education. When you use WorkKeys to show you are ready for work, you have an advantage with employers who accept or require job applicants to have WorkKeys scores. A growing number of states nationwide also are adopting WorkKeys to ensure that all their workers have needed skills.

What you need to know

WorkKeys is not like other tests, many of which measure how well prepared you are for college. Instead, WorkKeys gives you a better idea about your readiness for the workforce in general and for specific jobs and careers.

WorkKeys test questions are based on situations in the everyday work world. You should try to do your best on the assessments to get the most accurate picture of your workforce skills. And, you may find employers in your community who will ask for your scores during an interview. These scores help employers choose the most qualified candidates for their jobs.



Benefits for students

- Enables you to rank above other job applicants who do not have needed skills
- Shows prospective employers concrete proof of your skills
- Increases the chances you will be hired after graduation
- Enables you to see the importance of your courses
- Improves your success in entry-level and subsequent jobs

The importance of college and career readiness

If you want to be adequately prepared for the workforce, you need to understand the requirements for jobs you are considering. WorkKeys helps you determine the skill levels and education required for various jobs. The chart below shows information for three of the more than 10,000 jobs profiled in the WorkKeys database.

	Receptionist	Machine Operator	Accountant
Education	High school	High school and training or AA degree	4-year degree
Salary	\$22,090	\$30,430	\$45,890
WorkKeys Skill Levels			
<i>Math</i>	3 4 5 6 7	3 4 5 6 7	3 4 5 6 7
<i>Reading</i>	3 4 5 6 7	3 4 5 6 7	3 4 5 6 7
<i>Locating Information</i>	3 4 5 6	3 4 5 6	3 4 5 6



What parents can do to help

Children count on their parents for guidance. By showing your son or daughter the importance of acquiring solid workplace skills, you can expand their career options and potential for more rewarding jobs. You can help by:

- Recognizing the value of workplace skills
- Encouraging the development of a positive workplace attitude
- Taking an active role in understanding and using WorkKeys scores
- Becoming more involved in their current academic efforts
- Providing support and direction for decisions about continuing education beyond high school

Alaska English Language Arts & Mathematics Standards

Transition & Implementation Process

2009-2010		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Standards Development February 2010-November 2011 8 meetings to develop standards (K-12 and post-secondary educators, industry representatives) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 230 Alaska representatives • 56 organizations 		Educator Awareness -Curriculum Alignment Institute, Fall & Spring, attended by 21 districts -Summer Literacy Institute, May 2011 attended by 17 districts Public Awareness - New standards FAQ's and introductory materials for distribution	Public Awareness -Extended public comment period December 2011 – May 2012 -5 regional community meetings -8 EED webinars -17 EED in-person presentations - 18 postings in EED Information Exchange - FAQs and standards sent to 150 business and education organizations across Alaska Educator Awareness -Presentations to superintendents and principals at annual fly-in and conference -Curriculum Alignment Institute, Fall & Spring, attended by 37 districts -Summer Literacy Institute, May 2011 attended by 18 districts Standards approved June 2012	Public Awareness -Standards booklets mailed to all Alaskan schools Educator Awareness -Curriculum Alignment Institute, Fall & Spring, attended by 31 districts -Summer Literacy Institute, May 2013 attended by 20 districts -Alaska Association of School Boards annual conference -Alaska Association of School Administrators annual conference	Public Awareness -Redesign of EED website - 35,000 parent guides to standards distributed to districts -Parent guides, business brochure, and standards flyer sent to 200 public organizations across Alaska -Newspaper advertisements, radio spots, movie theatre ads placed across Alaska -Presentations to chambers of commerce and business organizations Educator Awareness -Teaching & Learning Support Institute, September 2013 attended by 33 districts -EED Presentations at 20 statewide conferences -New Teaching & Learning Support monthly newsletter for districts and schools -10 district-level presentations at districts' request -Summer Math & Reading Institute May 2014	Public Awareness -Continued media campaign in preparation for Spring 2015 assessments Educator Awareness -Continued professional development presentations and materials targeting all districts in Alaska First assessment of Alaska ELA and Math Standards April 2015
Educator Awareness -Curriculum Alignment Institute, Fall & Spring, attended by 20 districts						

Teacher Blogs > Living in Dialogue

Colorado Moms Push Bill to Delay Common Core

By [Anthony Cody](#) on January 23, 2014 11:10 AM

Guest post by Colorado Moms

Like so many states in the union, Colorado's 2014 Legislative Session is largely focused on education. The session opened with the introduction of eight education bills...and now there is one more. Senator Vicki Marble has presented the **Colorado Mom's Bill to delay the implementation of Common Core and PARCC testing** on behalf of a group of parents from her district and throughout the state of Colorado.

Our History

We are moms, from all across Colorado, with different backgrounds and political beliefs, coming together, in most cases, as strangers, because we oppose Common Core. This bill has *nothing* to do with political affiliation and everything to do with our children.

Why Common Core and PARCC alarmed us and our reaction

The state of Colorado is known for having top quality public schools and school of choice. When we found out that school choice would be threatened by the adoption of CCSS and PARCC, we knew we had to do something. For most of us, the first few weeks after we learned about CCSS were spent researching and wrapping our heads around this sly and nefarious monster that had crept into our children's school under the guise of college and career ready. Hour and hours of digging, reading RTTT applications, MOU's, emails back and forth filled sleepless nights. We knew we had to take action, but what could these moms who have jobs and families to care for do to stop this machine? Truly we all have felt like we were David looking up at Goliath. So we prayed. And low and behold, a meeting with an out going school board member turned local Republican Party leader begat a meeting with Sen. Kevin Lunberg who called Sen. Vicki Marble to come to headquarters to hear our story. We presented our research and our concerns. They listened and then Vicki said, "I'll carry your bill." Prayer answered!

We are concerned because Common Core brings the standards to the middle, lifting some schools and lowering others. If a school is already outperforming with its current standards, it still has to teach Common Core's lower standards in order to pass the test to which everything is tied. These standards are copyrighted and cannot be exceeded or changed more than 15%. It is hard to achieve greatness while staying within 15% of mediocrity. Colorado, along with so many others, took the Race to the Top bribe money to adopt Common Core, even before the standards were fully written and neither parents nor legislators were asked to vote on this.

The Bill

We spoke to Senator Marble about our concerns and she listened. Senator Marble was willing to file a bill, but she allowed the moms to help with the text, because as she said, "it is your passion and it is your bill". There was a lot to learn about writing a comprehensive and effective bill, along the way, we found even more like-minded, dedicated and brilliant moms all across Colorado. Through late-night kitchen table meetings, conference calls at swim practice, and Skype sessions in the living room, the Colorado Mom's Bill was written and will be introduced on Friday, January 24th.

The bill asks that implementation of the Common Core State Standards and PARCC be delayed until a comprehensive review is complete. The review will be conducted by an independent task force and will range from an analysis of the academic standards to an independent fiscal audit of implementation, training, technology, and maintenance costs.

Moms in Colorado understand that there are problems with public education. The problems vary considerably depending upon economic factors, local cultures, and locations. Concern for our children brought together moms from every background. Politically, they have little in common, coming from all walks of life, rural and urban areas as well as suburbs and ranches but they stand united with this bill. The moms hope Colorado will unite with them and join the ranks of the many other states who are now rejecting Common Core and/or its tests because they also want better for their children:

Florida, Indiana, Alaska, Alabama, California, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

Colorado moms are urging Coloradans to contact their legislators today; ask them to co-sponsor this bill with Sen Marble. Time is of the essence. This bill needs your support NOW. Please request bipartisan support of the Colorado Mom's Bill to delay implementation and review Common Core and PARCC, giving our state time to fully review them. The Colorado moms also thank Senator Vicki Marble, who listened, and met countless times with the moms and was willing to carry this bill for Colorado. Please help us and support this Colorado

Mom's bill.








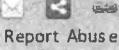


Signed: Kristin Tallis, Cheri Kiesecker, Aimie Randall, Lynnette Strauser, Geniphyr Ponce-Pore on behalf of ALL The MOMS and dads of Core Concerns and across Colorado; Fort Collins Core Concerns, **Parents Against Recognizing Common Core**; Anita and Mike Stapleton, Pueblo Stop Common Core Colorado; Barb Hulet, Katrina Yochim, Karen King **Olathe Colorado Parents Against Common Core**; See **MORE groups against Colorado Common Core.**

What do you think of the bill these activists have generated? Should the Common Core be delayed?

Categories: Common core standards common core assessments grassroots activism

13 comments

Oldest to Newest

	<p>kskorte 10:39 PM on January 23, 2014</p> <p>This is awesome. From a New Mexico mother of four public school children and a Board of Education member in Albuquerque, I salute you. Check out the movement a bunch of us angry moms has started here: www.stand4kidsnm.org and www.facebook.com/stand4kidsnm</p> <p>Good luck. It's wonderful to see Colorado, Washington state, New York, Tennessee and other parents across the nation fighting corporate education reformers!</p> <p>Let's take back our schools! Kathy Korte</p>	<p>Score: 3</p>	
	<p>Al Meyers 1:46 PM on January 24, 2014</p> <p>This is precisely why public education is broken. People are misinformed and fear what they don't understand. So which political group is behind this one? Tea Party? NEA? NEPC? AFT? The lack of political affiliation they claim is ridiculous. This is about parents who feel the status quo is superior to needed reforms. Politics and public education are a dangerous brew.</p>	<p>Score: 5</p>	
	<p>AnthonyCody 2:23 PM on January 24, 2014</p> <p>Isn't it possible that people such as these might organize around a common interest and not be puppets of some larger political force?</p>	<p>Score: 1</p>	
	<p>Al Meyers 3:55 PM on January 24, 2014</p> <p>I don't think so, Anthony. Politics will always sabotage public education reform.</p> <p>1 reply</p>	<p>Score: -1</p>	
	<p>cheriK 4:26 PM on January 24, 2014</p> <p>Anthony-thank you for posting this blog about the Colorado MOM's bill.</p> <p>As one of the Moms, I emphatically repeat that this has nothing to do with political affiliation. This is America and it is my children and other children that I am concerned about. Citizens should have a say.</p> <p>Our bill asks for simple things:</p> <p>SLOW DOWN. REVIEW. WHAT WILL THIS COST the taxpayers of our state?</p> <p>Let's review the standards, and see how they compare with other nations. Let's have Higher Ed folks chime in-since we are wanting college readiness, shouldn't we get the opinion of the colleges? PARCC tests are brand new, an experiment. WHY are we spending Millions per district just to buy computers for the test?</p>	<p>Score: 3</p>	

WHAT IS THE HARM IN PAUSING and REVIEWING? A little more time to make sure we are doing the right thing. what's the old saying moms always say?

HASTE MAKES WASTE



edreform@uark.edu

Score:

4:31 PM on January 24, 2014

7

Maybe the proposed reforms in the name of Common Core are actually worse than the status quo? How is one to know? Maybe "needed reforms" look much different. How is one to judge? When two Ph.D.s in math writing the math standards deliberately leave out the standards needed for STEM preparation, parents have a right to be suspicious. The question is why state boards of education, governors, Chambers of Commerce, and many others didn't ask those in a position to know. Sandra Stotsky



Rea gangirl

Score:

7:23 PM on January 24, 2014

6

I am an educator, mom, and the founder of a parent-led school reform group in Colorado. I am completely behind the effort to delay (and ultimately eliminate) Common Core. The loss of local control of our schools has been disastrous for students, teachers, and the education system in general. In my experience, and what I have learned about Common Core, many of the teachers in my district will actually have to lower their standards and expectations, and "dumb-down" the curricula they have spent countless hours devising and preparing. Common Core as it is will serve only to confuse and discourage students. It's a train wreck waiting to happen. JUST SAY NO TO COMMON CORE!



Pollywog

Score:

8:52 PM on January 24, 2014

3

As a Colorado educator for 17 years with a total of 32 years in the classroom, I can say with confidence Common Core is not just the "next new thing to come down the pike." It is a devilish design to dumb down our students with erroneous and negative information about our nation's history (lauding Communism as the type of government to which we should aspire), to confuse and confound them with math standards that defy logic, and on top of that, to mine personal information about their families that would make the NSA proud. No, this is NOT, Mr. Meyers, a Republican or Democrat issue. This is an issue that lies at the very foundation of our country's liberty. An UNinformed citizenry is one that will be subdued by sweet talking masters and a created managed economy, a commodity to be ruled by elites. As I heard it said recently: "Common Core is not education, it is the whips and chains of a New Age...nothing less than a Slavery of the Mind..."

Do your homework, people - and REJECT COMMON CORE!



Jack Matthews

Score:

9:34 PM on January 24, 2014

4

Definitely slow this down. Go learn what Common Core really is and scrap it.

Example of standards in CC English Language Arts

Dr. Stotsky quotes: "Seniors will graduate with a Grade 7 reading level." Incidentally, Readers Digest is written at 8th Grade level.

- Removes a significant portion of traditional literature
- Heavily loaded with technical text, which has a propensity towards robbing our children of the joy of reading
- Some suggested reading material is shockingly pornographic and not age appropriate.



AngeliqueM

Score:

9:42 PM on January 24, 2014

4

I support this bill for the reasons below:

The rigorous standards of Common Core are NOT rigorous at all. You have not been told the whole story. Common Core:

- Puts our children 2 years behind high achieving countries. "...by the end of 5th grade the material being covered in arithmetic and algebra in Core Standards is more than a year behind the early grade expectations in most high achieving countries; by the end of the 7th grade Core standards are roughly 2 years behind." Dr. James Milgram - Stanford University - Validation Committee who refused to sign off on math standards. That's simply embarrassing!
- Seniors graduate with a grade 7 reading level. Not acceptable!
- Standards have been dropped dramatically and are not rigorous, which is not a college ready system as the Common Core mission statement reads.
- School districts, like Douglas County Colorado, who think they will simply surpass the low Common Core standards, will not have enough time to develop their own rigorous standards to outmaneuver the poor standards of Common Core
- States who have implemented and seen the problems ahead of us, are starting to withdraw from Common Core. They have



realized what a ghastly mistake they made in taking Federal money and agreeing to a curriculum in order to get the Fed's money, sight unseen. States agreed to accept Common Core before it was written in order to get money from the Feds. Once again boils down to the almighty dollar.

Do we really want to launch an already failed program, only to find that we will have to back-track because Common Core will set our children back. Not to mention the outrageous cost of implementing this already failed system.

Please, for the sake of our children, we have to reconsider this move towards Common Core. Stop now!



Jack Matthews

9:45 PM on January 24, 2014

Score:

0

Funny how none of these people who pushed for delay were activists until Common Core came upon their children and schools. Then Activist we are! Not to mention armed with knowledge from actually reading the standards and implementation plans.



MMoC

10:30 PM on January 24, 2014

Score:

0

Moms are informed and I have been bringing this to the attention of my school board and state school board for a year now. Thanks to the running and hiding of elected and public officials, I had to research and learn everything through my own research. It turned out to be a good thing because I learned facts and not propaganda. After watching this URL, I could relate because the same thing happened to me in my school district. <http://www.theblaze.com/stories/2014/01/15/fed-up-mother-tackles-common-core-in-viral-video-parents-have-no-voice/>

When they find you have facts and evidence to back your statements school districts and state boards push harder on their talking points and propaganda. Thank you, Barbara Hulet



Citizens

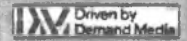
3:24 PM on January 26, 2014

Score:

0

Great article. The State Board of Education in Massachusetts decided to delay implementation for two years while it compares the Common Core (PARCC) tests to their existing to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exam. Dr. Sandra Stotsky resigned from the Common Core review committee for a number of reasons. One was the lack of emphasis on literature and replacing that emphasis on informational texts.

Let's hope more people figure out how devastating Common Core will be for our children.



Ground Rules for Posting

We encourage lively debate, but please be respectful of others. Profanity and personal attacks are prohibited. By commenting, you are agreeing to abide by our [user agreement](#). All comments are public.

8. Does the Common Core lead to a national curriculum?

“To make standards meaningful, they have to be integrated with changes in curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy.”⁸⁶ The words of Jay P. Greene, professor of education reform at the University of Arkansas, regarding the Common Core are proving prophetic, because implementing the Common Core is requiring states to substantially alter their curricula.⁸⁷

School officials have recognized the need for massive curriculum changes since 2011 when 64% of the officials surveyed by the Council of Chief School Superintendents Officials (CCSSO), one of the authors of the Common Core, said that their states would need completely new or significantly revised math curriculum in order to implement the Common Core. Fifty-six percent responded identically concerning their English language arts curriculum.⁸⁸ As of 2012, 29 states had developed new curriculum aligned to the Common Core.⁸⁹

Though the implementation of the Common Core is supposed to be “state-led,” the continued involvement of the federal government and the authors of the standards indicates that the Common Core is intended to realize a national curriculum. The federal government is prohibited by three sets of laws from prescribing a national curriculum, but the Department of Education has paid other organizations to do what it cannot.

The consortia receiving millions from the federal government to write standardized assessments are also being paid to produce curriculum guides for their 42 member states. The Performance Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium stressed in its application for a supplemental Race to the Top award that it would develop “model instructional units” for teachers. It received \$15.9 million to fund these efforts.⁹⁰ U.S. Secretary of Education

⁸⁶ Lindsey Burke, “Publicizing the Hidden Costs of the National Standards Push,” Education Notebook: Heritage Foundation, accessed June 7, 2013, <http://links.heritage.org/hostedemail/email.htm?h=ec4d3bd2a208dbd824288c7fa9ecb9c4&CID=9795639416&ch=2E03C8C87B70F318B54BE93A9A394F60>.

⁸⁷ As part of being members of a consortium or receiving Race to the Top funding, states are bound to implement all of the Common Core standards and may supplement the list with only 15% of their own standards. “Notice Inviting Applications,” *Federal Register* 75 no. 68 (April 9, 2010): 18171, accessed June 10, 2013, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-04-09/pdf/2010-8176.pdf>.

⁸⁸ *Common Core State Standards: Progress and Challenges in School Districts’ Implementation*, Center on Education Policy, September 2011.

⁸⁹ *Moving Forward: A National Perspective on States’ Progress in Common Core State Standards Implementation Planning* (Education First and Editorial Projects in Education, Inc., February 2013), 7, accessed June 10, 2013, http://www.edweek.org/media/movingforward_ef_epe_020413.pdf.

⁹⁰ *PARCC Proposal for Supplemental Race to the Top Assessment Award* (Performance Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, December 23, 2010), accessed June 11, 2013, <http://www.edweek.org/media/parccsupplementalproposal12-23achievefinal.pdf>; Joseph Conaty, *Race to the Top: SBAC Award Letter* (U.S. Department of Education, September 28, 2010), accessed June 11, 2013, <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment/sbac-award-letter.pdf>.

Arne Duncan affirmed that “PARCC . . . will be developing curriculum frameworks.”⁹¹ Similarly, the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium promised to build “curriculum materials . . . to support states’ transition to the Common Core State Standards” and was rewarded with \$15.9 million.⁹² The efforts of the federal government to develop curriculum models confirm the analysis of two members of the Common Core Validation Committee who refused to sign the standards: the Common Core is “a laudable effort to shape a national curriculum.”⁹³

The groundwork for a national curriculum is also being laid by groups of states and private organizations collaborating to develop common curricula. In an effort funded by the Gates Foundation, the states of New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Colorado have started creating an open-source “platform” that will allow teachers to download and share resources aligned to the Common Core. The platform will be available to all states in 2014.⁹⁴ Additionally, Achieve, one of the organizations that advised the National Governors Association (NGA) and CCSSO during the drafting of the Common Core, has partnered with those same groups to produce model curricula for the states.⁹⁵

Implementation instructions for the states written by the authors of the Common Core suggest that a national curriculum is the goal of the standards. NGA recommends that “States and districts . . . share the costs of developing new curricula and instructional tools and not each develop their own at greater expense for each.”⁹⁶ The Common Core, Inc., calls for cooperation between the states to ensure that math standards are “translated into textbooks, workbooks, diagnostic tests for teacher use, and other classroom materials that enable teachers to bring the curriculum into the classroom in a relatively *consistent*, effective way” (emphasis added).⁹⁷

⁹¹ Arne Duncan, “Beyond the Bubble Tests: The Next Generation of Assessments,” Department of Education, September 2, 2010, accessed June 11, 2013, <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/beyond-bubble-tests-next-generation-assessments-secretary-arne-duncans-remarks-state-1>.

⁹² *Supplemental Funding Scope: Overview Table* (SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, January 16, 2011), accessed June 10, 2013, <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Smarter-Balanced-Supplemental-Funds.pdf>.

Conaty, *SBAC Award Letter*, <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment/sbac-award-letter.pdf>.

⁹³ Sandra Stotsky and Ze’ev Wurman, “Common Core’s Standards Still Don’t Make the Grade: Why Massachusetts and California Must Regain Control over Their Academic Destinies,” *A Pioneer Institute White Paper* no. 65 (July 2010): iii, accessed June 11, 2013, <http://pioneerinstitute.org/download/common-cores-standards-still-dont-make-the-grade/>.

⁹⁴ Tabitha Grossman, Ryan Reyna, and Stephanie Shipton, *Realizing the Potential: How Governors Can Lead Effective Implementation of the Common Core State Standards* (National Governors Association, 2011), 24, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1110CCSSIIMPLEMENTATIONGUIDE.PDF>.

⁹⁵ “Model Course Pathways in Mathematics,” Achieve, accessed June 10, 2013, <http://www.achieve.org/mathpathways>.

⁹⁶ Grossman, Reyna, and Shipton, *Realizing the Potential*, 25, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1110CCSSIIMPLEMENTATIONGUIDE.PDF>.

⁹⁷ Craig D. Jerald, *Benchmarking for Success: Ensuring U.S. Students Receive a World-Class Education* (NGA, CCSSO, and Achieve, 2008), 26, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://www.achieve.org/files/BenchmarkingforSuccess.pdf>.

The Department of Education acknowledged in its announcement of Race to the Top that standards are supposed to affect curriculum.⁹⁸ Those who support the Common Core also recognize that standards are intended to mold curriculum.

Kathleen Porter-Magee, a fervent supporter of the Common Core, explains, “While one could choose to pit those two policy advancements against each other (standards versus curriculum), a much more logical way to view it is that while strong standards provide a solid foundation, you still need to build the schoolhouse.”⁹⁹

One of the main arguments for implementation of the Common Core is that it will increase the ability of families to move from one state to another without interrupting their child’s education. But completely uninterrupted education is only possible if the *same* material is taught at the *same* time across the entire country.

Academic standards are meaningless if they do not shape the curriculum used. If this movement to nationalize curriculum continues, it will endanger the ability of homeschools and private schools to choose their own curriculum.

Former deputy general counsel of the Department of Education Robert S. Eitel and former general counsel Kent D. Talbert warn, “Left unchallenged by Congress, these standards and assessments will ultimately direct the course of elementary and secondary study in most states across the nation, running the risk that states will become little more than administrative agents for a nationalized K–12 program of instruction and raising a fundamental question about whether the Department is exceeding its statutory boundaries.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ See *Federal Register* 74 no. 221 (18 November 2009): 59836, <http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2009-4/111809a.html>.

⁹⁹ Kathleen Porter-Magee, “No Love for Common Core? Why Tom Misses the Mark with His Critique,” Thomas B. Fordham Institute, February 17, 2012, accessed June 11, 2013, <http://www.edexcellence.net/commentary/education-gadfly-daily/common-core-watch/2012/no-love-for-common-core.html>.

¹⁰⁰ Robert S. Eitel and Kent D. Talbert, “The Road to a National Curriculum: The Legal Aspects of the Common Core Standards, Race the Top, and Conditional Waivers,” *A Pioneer Institute White Paper* no. 81 (February 2012): 15.

Alaska State Constitution education clause

Section 7.1 - Public Education.

The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution.

Mission of the State Board of Education & Early Development

To ensure quality standards-based instruction to improve academic achievement for all students.

Recent milestones in leadership

Over the last two years, the State Board has promulgated regulations to improve Alaska's public schools. This foundation of educational excellence positioned Alaska to receive a waiver from the accountability system of No Child Left Behind. The state and school districts are working to make this foundation a reality in the classroom.

Specifically, we have:

- increased the rigor of our English language arts and mathematics standards, which now span all grades;
- tied educator evaluations partly to student learning; and
- implemented an Alaska system of accountability and support for schools.
- Rigorous assessments are planned for spring 2015.

The ultimate aim of our new K-12 standards is to provide a platform for increasing student achievement.

The ultimate aim of educator evaluations is to provide supports to teachers in order to increase student achievement.

The ultimate aim of the accountability system is to provide supports to students, teachers and schools in order to increase student achievement.

The ultimate aim of assessing students is to provide supports to students, teachers and schools in order to increase student achievement.

REGULATIONS AND OTHER BOARD ACTIONS

Assessments and accountability

To reduce the number of assessments that school districts must administer, the State Board in April repealed the requirement to give students a norm-referenced test in grades 5 and 7. Norm-referenced tests compare students with sample populations of students nationwide, rather than with a set of standards. Alaska will continue to have points of comparison through the National Assessment of Educational Progress in grades 4 and 8 and the SAT and ACT for college-going juniors and seniors. See http://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/pdf/13_april_packet.pdf

In June, the State Board adopted regulations to implement Alaska's new accountability system, replacing the federal accountability system of No Child Left Behind. Alaska's new accountability system includes the Alaska School Performance Index; a star rating system for schools; public acknowledgement of highest-performing and high-progress schools; state assistance to schools that need improvement; public reporting of aggregate data; and reporting of individual student results to parents and their educators. No individually identifiable data about students will be made available to the federal government.

Alaska's accountability system is based on data about student achievement and *growth* in reading, writing and mathematics; attendance; performance on work-ready and college-entrance assessments in high school; participation in work-ready assessments; and high school graduation. This formula, called the Alaska School Performance Index, ranks schools from one star to five stars.

Additionally, each school and district has the goal of reducing its percentage of non-proficient students by half over six years, including in each subgroup of students: students with disabilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, Alaska Natives and American Indians, Caucasians, African-Americans, Hispanics, Multi-Race, and Asian/Pacific Islanders.

Districts are required to implement improvement plans in one-star, two-star and three-star schools. Improvement plans also are required for four-star and five-star schools whose graduation rate has declined from the previous year; or whose assessment scores have declined for two consecutive years; or which have not met their targets for reducing non-proficiency for two consecutive years. The last two criteria apply to achievement in the student body as a whole or any subgroup(s) of students.

As required by the U.S. Department of Education, the state will:

- recognize highest-performing and high-progress schools as Reward Schools;

- require the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools (recipients of federal anti-poverty funds) to implement a significant program of improvement aligned with comprehensive turnaround principles (Priority Schools);
- and require the next 10% of low-performing Title I schools to implement appropriate interventions to address specific deficiencies (Focus Schools).

The results of the first year of the new accountability system appear later in this report.

Teacher quality

In April, the State Board approved the University of Alaska Southeast's endorsement program in distance delivery and e-learning for certified teachers. The program will increase the competence of teachers to design and deliver online courses. The program fits well with Alaska's Learning Network, whose goal is for highly qualified Alaska teachers to design and deliver online high school courses so that all students have access to career-ready and college-ready courses.

http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/13_april_packet.pdf

In June, the State Board approved an advanced endorsement program from the University of Alaska Anchorage for certified elementary teachers. The 18-credit endorsement is in teaching English language learners. Teachers will learn to support students' academic achievement while sustaining their cultural identity. The program supports the board's adoption of cultural standards for teachers and schools, and its goal of academic achievement for all students. See

http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/13_june_packet.pdf

In September, the State Board approved an advanced endorsement program in K-8 elementary education at the University of Alaska Southeast. The 18-credit program is offered by distance throughout Alaska. See http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/13_sept_packet.pdf

In December, the State Board approved a new bachelor's degree program in secondary education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Candidates can obtain an initial teaching certificate with a secondary education endorsement (grades 7-12) in art, biology, chemistry, Earth science, economics, English, French, German, history, mathematics, political science, or Spanish.

Candidates simultaneously take a double major: one in their subject matter, and the other in secondary education. Candidates potentially can complete the program in four years. Prior to this program, students earned a bachelor's degree in a subject area and then underwent one to two years of teacher training for which there was very limited financial aid. See

<http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/14-DecemberPacket.pdf>

Energy efficiency

In accordance with Senate Bill 237, the State Board received a recommendation from the department's Bond Reimbursement and Grant Committee for energy-efficient codes for school construction and major renovations. In March, the State Board adopted by reference the

American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers' Standard 90.1. 2010 edition.

Residential programs

In March, the State Board adopted regulations to allow district-operated statewide residential programs to accept variable-term students. Variable-term programs rotate students in and out of the program for short periods of study. The programs operate throughout the full school year. The board was responding to requests from rural districts that want to bring students from villages to hub cities for short-term programs in career and technical subjects, personal growth, and study skills. The regulations support the board's goal of serving the needs of all students.

In December, the State Board adopted a regulation to align residential program regulations with new state law. The regulation refers to residential programs as residential schools, removes the limit on the number of such schools, allows for district-wide residential schools, and allows for schools that accept students for variable terms during the school year.

Early literacy

In June, the State Board adopted regulations to require districts to screen kindergarten, first-grade, second-grade, and certain third-grade students for early literacy skills, in order to identify students experiencing delays. The department will maintain a list of approved screening assessments. Districts will report the data once a year. The regulation implements a state appropriation for such screenings. See http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/13_june_packet.pdf

In December, the State Board adopted a regulation to clarify the frequency of required early literacy screenings, provide two tracks by which a screening tool may be approved by the department, and clarify the manner in which districts must provide data to the department. The regulation gives districts more flexibility in choosing screening tools and more time to report data.

State Museum

In June, the State Board adopted regulations to formalize the policies of the state-required Museum Collections Advisory Committee regarding the acquisition and deaccession of artifacts. See http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/13_june_packet.pdf

The 70% instruction requirement

In March, the State Board approved requests from five school districts for waivers from the state requirement that districts spend at least 70% of their operating funds on instruction. These waivers refer to the audited financial statements for fiscal year 2012. The districts are: Alaska Gateway, Galena, Kashunamiut, Klawock, and Yakutat.

In October, the State Board approved waivers for 24 districts from the state requirement to budget at least 70% of their operating funds for instruction. The districts are: Alaska Gateway, Aleutian Region, Aleutians East, Bristol Bay, Chatham, Copper River, Hoonah, Hydaburg, Iditarod, Kake, Kashunamiut, Kuspuk, Lake and Peninsula, Nome, North Slope, Northwest Arctic, Pelican, Pribilof, Saint Mary's, Skagway, Southeast Island, Tanana, Yukon Flats, and Yupiit.

Charter schools

In March, the State Board approved a five-year renewal of the Anvil City Science Academy's charter in Nome, a 10-year renewal of the Frontier Charter School's charter in Anchorage, and a five-year initial charter for the Greatland Academy Charter on the Kenai Peninsula. See http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/13_march_packet.pdf.

In June, the State Board approved a 10-year renewal of Highland Tech Charter School in Anchorage. See http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/pdf/13_june_packet.pdf

New officers, members and staff

The State Board elected Jim Merriner as Chair, Esther Cox as First Vice-Chair, and Janel Keplinger as Second Vice Chair, effective July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014.

Sue Hull of Fairbanks was sworn in as a member of the State Board in March. Hull will serve a five-year term in a seat reserved for the Fourth Judicial District.

James Fields of Glennallen was sworn in as a member of the State Board in April. Fields will serve a five-year term in a seat reserved for the regional educational attendance areas, which are the school districts in the unorganized borough.

Carly Williams of Palmer joined the State Board in July as student advisor for a one-year term.

Lt. Col. Douglas Hays joined the State Board in September as military advisor. The military determines his term.

In June, longtime Alaska educator James A. Seitz of Anchorage was named Executive Secretary (director) of the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission. The nine-member commission, appointed by the Governor, ensures that members of the teaching profession at the K-12 and postsecondary levels are qualified and ethical educators.

In March, Jackie Fernandez was named Curator of Collections at the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka, one of the Alaska State Museums. She oversees 6,000 artifacts representing each of Alaska's Native groups.

The State Board approved four appointees to Mt. Edgecumbe High School's advisory board. They are Doreen Deaton, Loraine DeAsis, Regina Johnson, and Ty Mase.

Resolutions

In January 2013, the State Board passed a resolution supporting the Denali Centennial Climb scheduled for July 2013, in which descendants of the first people to reach the summit, in 1913, climbed Denali. Many of the original climbing party were young Alaska Natives. The State Board supported the educational and inspirational nature of the climb. See [http://education.alaska.gov/State Board/resolutions/01-2013.pdf](http://education.alaska.gov/State_Board/resolutions/01-2013.pdf).

SIGNIFICANT STEPS

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver

In May, the U.S. Department of Education granted Alaska a two-year waiver from major provisions of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, commonly known as No Child Left Behind. The waiver took effect in the 2013-2014 school year.

Alaska was the 37th state (plus Washington, D.C.) to receive a waiver. Under the waiver, states agreed to:

- adopt standards in English language arts and mathematics that prepare students for education and training after high school, often referred to as college-ready and career-ready standards;
- devise their own system for holding schools accountable for students' academic success, including student populations that traditionally underperform; and
- require school districts to evaluate teachers and principals partly on student achievement.

Under the two-year waiver, Alaska has opted out of NCLB's system of accountability and consequences known as Adequate Yearly Progress.

NCLB's goal was that all assessed students be proficient in reading and math by spring 2014. Schools and districts were held accountable in up to 31 categories. If schools and districts underperformed in any category to any degree, they were subject to consequences. School districts around the nation were concerned they would soon face consequences for not meeting unattainable goals. States were concerned they would have to implement consequences that are expensive, disruptive, and in some cases unjustified.

Alaska was in a position to apply for a waiver because it had been working since 2010 on new standards and on methods of evaluating educators:

- In June 2012, the State Board adopted Alaska's college-ready and career-ready standards.
- In December 2012, the State Board adopted regulations for school districts' evaluations of educators.
- In June 2013, the State Board adopted regulations to implement Alaska's own accountability system.

New accountability system: the Alaska School Performance Index (ASPI)

The Alaska School Performance Index measures schools by a combination of data: student achievement on the state's reading, writing and math assessments; growth in the school's student body in those assessments from the prior year; and attendance. Schools with high school students also are measured by graduation rates; student performance on college-ready and career-ready assessments such as the SAT, ACT, and WorkKeys; and students' participation rate in the WorkKeys assessment.

This year's school ratings are at: <http://education.alaska.gov/aspi/>. Fifty-two of 503 rated schools earned five stars, the highest rating; 190 schools are four-star schools; 162 schools are three-star schools; 49 schools are two-star schools; and 50 schools are one-star schools. Collectively, nearly 92 percent of students attended schools in 2012-2013 that earned three stars or above.

Reward Schools

Under the Alaska School Performance Index, the state's new accountability system, the department recognized 49 schools as 2013 Reward Schools to honor their student achievement from the 2012-2013 school year.

Reward Schools are recognized in two categories: highest performing and high progress. Thirty-one schools were highest-performing and 37 schools were high progress. Nineteen schools were recognized in both categories, making a total of 49 schools to be named Reward Schools.

Alaska names both categories of Reward Schools in three grade spans: K-8 schools, 9-12 schools, and K-12 schools, which represent the spectrum of rural and urban schools. (Elementary schools and middle schools are included in the K-8 grade span.)

To qualify for Reward status as a *highest-performing* school:

- the school must be in the top 10 percent of schools in its grade span (K-8, 9-12, or K-12) based on its score under the Alaska School Performance Index (explained above);
- over the two most recent years, the school must have a graduation rate that averaged at least 85 percent, if it has 12th-graders; and
- over the two most recent years, the school must have met its goal for increasing the percentage of students who are proficient in reading, writing, and math, for the student body as a whole and all subgroups of students.

To qualify for Reward status as a *high-progress* school:

- the school must be in the highest 10 percent of all schools in the Growth and Proficiency Index (explained below);

- have an average score of at least 95 in the Growth and Proficiency Index over the past three years for all students;
- have an average Growth and Proficiency Index score of at least 90 in the most recent year for the subgroups Alaska Native/American Indian students, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English language learners (if there are at least five students in a subgroup);
- the graduation rate must average at least 85 percent over the two most recent years, if the school has 12th-graders.

The Growth and Proficiency Index, briefly stated, measures whether a student population in a school is increasing, remaining stable, or declining in achievement in reading, writing, and math from one year to the next. A school receives an index score for its student body as a whole, and scores for each of the four subgroups mentioned above. The index looks at each student's performance over those two years and creates a combined picture of a school's performance.

See http://education.alaska.gov/news/releases/2013/reward_schools_oct2013.pdf

Implementing accountability

The department's website now provides easy access for educators, parents, the media, and the general public to understand Alaska's English language and mathematics standards, educator-evaluation regulations, the school accountability system, and eventually the new assessments.

The webpages include background documents, fact sheets, FAQs, and resources for educators. The standards are broken down by grade level, for easy access by educators and parents. The parent link supplies easy access to parent guides and PTA tips for each grade level, as well.

The department regularly emails a newsletter to school districts and education organizations to alert them to new resources and upcoming professional-development opportunities.

The department has participated in conferences and trainings with educators, including superintendents and principals, bilingual/multicultural educators, career and technical educators, science and math teachers, and place-based educators.

The department has distributed 40,000 printed copies of the parent guide and tips. Through ads in newspapers, on movie screens, and over the radio the department has publicized this parent resource.

The department has distributed 45,000 copies of a parent brochure about early learning, emphasizing its value, the ways that schools help struggling readers, and how to help children at home. Through ads in newspapers and over the radio, the department has publicized these parent guides.

The department has posted Alaska School Performance Index and Annual Measureable Objective worksheets for all schools, using 2012-2013 student performance data. Based upon these results, all schools have received a performance ranking from one star to five stars. Sixteen schools have been designated as Priority Schools, 29 schools as Focus Schools, 48 schools as Reward Schools, and 12 districts as Tier II and Tier III districts.

All districts are categorized within one of three tiers. Districts in which fewer than 25% of the schools are 1-star or 2-stars are Tier I districts. Districts in which 25% to 49.99% of the schools are 1-star and 2-star schools, or 25% to 49.99% of the students attend a 1-star or 2-star school, are Tier II districts. Districts in which 50% or more of the schools are 1-star and 2-star schools, or 50% or more of the students attend a 1- or 2-star school, are Tier III districts. Tier II and III districts must submit an improvement plan to the department.

Nine department staff have been trained and assigned as liaisons to the 98 1-star and 2-star schools and the 12 Tier II and III districts. These liaisons assist in completing School and District Improvement Plans. Schools submitted plans by the November 1 deadline, and liaisons are providing feedback.

Implementing Awareness Campaign for Early Literacy

In accordance with amendments to AS 14,03.072 (a), the department has implemented a campaign to improve parental awareness of the importance of early literacy. The department created brochures informing parents about their schools' intervention strategies, home literacy plans, grade retention policies, and strategies and resources to help children learn to read. The department mailed 55,000 copies to the school districts, which are distributing them to parents of children in kindergarten through grade 3. Additionally, the department has established a web page to serve as a resource for parents about literacy research and ways to help their children at home. See [Http://education.alaska.gov](http://education.alaska.gov) and click on the yellow Parent/Community star. The department is publicizing the importance of early literacy, and advising parents to contact their schools for more information, through radio and newspaper ads.

Maryland schools need \$100 million for online Common Core tests, says report

By Valerie Strauss, Updated: January 17 at 9:33 am

A new report from Maryland's Education Department to the legislature says that the vast majority of schools in many of the state's counties are not technologically prepared to give new online Common Core-aligned standardized tests and that at least \$100 million will have to be spent by 2015 to get ready.

In Montgomery County alone, it is estimated that necessary computer purchases will cost some \$10 million, wireless enhancements to the infrastructure another \$3 million and other technological improvements an additional \$4 million. Prince George's County estimates it will need at least \$5 million in improvements — money neither county has to spend. Eleven of 24 school systems in the state have completed a series of tests to determine readiness, and in those 11, a whopping 85 percent of schools aren't prepared, the report said.

State lawmakers were briefed on the report on Wednesday, [according to this story](#) in the Baltimore Sun, which quoted Sen. Paul G. Pinsky, a Prince George's County Democrat and member of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee, as saying that "some of the data that they showed us raises some concerns."

Indeed it should, especially since just last month Maryland State Superintendent of Schools Lillian Lowery [tried to reassure](#) Gov. Martin O'Malley that the challenge was with the tests, not the technology. O'Malley said: "Describe for me how much of this is an IT challenge and how much of this is a testing and education. [challenge]?" She gave a long response, and then said, "It's the testing, not the IT."

Maryland is part of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), one of two multi-state consortia that — with some \$350 million in federal funds — promised to develop standardized tests aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The Core standards were adopted by 46 states plus the District of Columbia in recent years, though a number of states are [reconsidering their participation as opposition has grown](#). Maryland, in fact, [recently took on the role](#) as the "fiscal agent" for PARCC but did so reluctantly, and, O'Malley said, as "a favor" to President Obama, whose administration asked the state to take over from Florida, which dropped out of the consortium.

New curriculum aligned to the standards has been implemented this year in schools across the state, and Maryland is planning to give up the Maryland School

Assessments in 2015 and replace them with the new exams for students in grades 3-11. Educators have asked Lowery to suspend this spring's test administration because it no longer tests curriculum being taught to students, but she has refused.

The General Assembly had requested the report from the state Education Department to assess schools' readiness for the new exams.

Some educators around the country have been calling for a moratorium on new Core-aligned online standardized testing until the schools are technologically ready and the new curriculum has been fully implemented.

"We need to focus on getting this transition right and doing what's best for students, not rushing ahead without giving educators and students the support they need," said Adam Mendelson, spokesman for the Maryland State Education Association.

Here are some of the highlights from the report:

There will be a 280 percent increase in the number of online test-takers when we move to PARCC — 301,036 vs 1,144,448

* Total time (in minutes) devoted to state standardized testing will increase with the PARCC exams by:

- Grade 3: 73 percent (277 vs 480)
- Grade 4: 102 percent (276 vs 560)
- Grade 5: 90 percent (297 vs 565)
- Grade 6: 95 percent (289 vs 565)
- Grade 7: 84 percent (306 vs 565)
- Grade 8: 83 percent (308 vs 565)

* In the 11 counties that have completed preparedness tests, 85 percent of the schools are not ready for the online PARCC exams:

- 46.65 percent of elementary schools are ready for assessment and instruction
- 26.57 percent of middle schools are ready for assessment and instruction
- 8.96 percent of high schools are ready for assessment and instruction

* Here are some highlights from the needs assessments that counties submitted detailing problems:

- Baltimore County: "While it will be difficult to test all of our students without addressing our two priorities, BCPS may be able to logistically test all students, but it will have a severe impact on our instructional program time having to use our existing wired and old desktop labs."
- Calvert: Installation and setup of wireless infrastructure will take approximately 2+ years."
- Caroline: "While we may be able to logistically test all students without implementing our priority 2 item, the impact on instruction would be severe."
- Cecil: "We are considering deferring computer-based instruction at Middle and High schools and altering 2nd semester course offerings in order to make physical space, then temporarily redistributing equipment to add testing capacity."
- Montgomery: "MCPS needs 17,894 additional PARCC compliant devices in order to meet the recommended testing scenario of 1:1 ratios within the largest testing

grade level. Without these devices, PARCC testing will likely not be completed within the testing window. ...[These devices] will cost \$10,736,400 that we do not have for this initiative.”

– Prince George’s: “With PARCC testing we will not have enough staff dedicated to provide technical support for all sites.”

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– State Costs for Adopting and Implementing the Common Core State Standards ▾

State Costs for Adopting and Implementing the Common Core State Standards

74 7

National Education Standards and Tests: Big Expense, Little Value

Lindsey Burke February 18, 2011 The Heritage Foundation

Spending on Standards and Assessment Systems: Selected States

The budgetary impact of jettisoning state accountability structures and replacing existing standards and testing could be significant—likely much more than RTTT funding provides.

Over the past decade, taxpayers have spent considerable sums to develop existing state accountability systems:

California. *California's Standardized Testing and Reporting Program, which began in 1998, tests students in grades 2–11 in English, math, science, social science, and history. Estimates suggest that it would cost California taxpayers \$1.6 billion to replace the existing state standards with the Common Core standards.[4] Yet California has agreed to overhaul its existing system with the new national standards and assessments.*

Florida. *The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test measures student achievement in grades 3–11 in reading, math, and science. Since 1996, Florida has spent more than \$404 million to develop and maintain the system.[5] Taxpayer investment in the existing high-quality assessments has been substantial, and overhauling the system for unproven national assessments, which Florida has agreed to adopt, could produce significant new implementation costs to taxpayers.*

Texas. *Texas has resisted the push for national standards. The Lone Star State estimates that the adoption of new standards and tests would cost taxpayers upwards of \$3 billion. "Adopting national standards and tests would also require the purchase of new textbooks, assessments, and professional development tools, costing Texas taxpayers an estimated \$3 billion, on top of the billions of dollars Texas has already*

invested in developing our strong standards," stated Governor Rick Perry (R) in a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in opposition to national standards and tests.[6]

Virginia. The Virginia Board of Education unanimously rejected adoption of the proposed Common Core State Standards and tests. One of the board's chief arguments against adopting national standards was fiscal, with members noting that "Virginia's investment in the Standards of Learning [SOL] since 1995 far exceeds the \$250 million Virginia potentially could have received by abandoning the SOL and competing in phase two of Race to the Top." [7] Indeed, since 1996, Virginia taxpayers have paid more than \$379 million to develop and implement the state SOLs. The costs for developing the SOLs include expenditures for the initial development and subsequent revisions of the curriculum frameworks and assessments, as well as the development of new supporting materials and professional development related to using the new testing system.

California

California and the Common Core: Will There Be a New Debate About K-12 Standards?

June 2010 EdSource

Based on the state's past experience, **new curriculum frameworks and instructional materials could cost about \$800 million for English and math combined.** In addition, **training teachers in both subjects could cost as much as \$765 million,** based on an assumption of \$2,500 per teacher per subject and counting teachers both in self-contained classrooms and those that teach single subjects. An additional \$20 million would be needed for training principals to help them in their work as instructional leaders (based on the amount that the state and the Gates Foundation appropriated in 2001-02 for initial training of administrators). Finally, developing tests based on new standards would add a relatively small amount to the total cost, with the exact sum depending on how quickly the new test questions were phased in and whether the state would retain the existing tests' format, which currently contains almost entirely multiple-choice questions. Participation in an assessment consortium could also affect this cost. **Thus, an estimate of the total cost of a more comprehensive retooling is about \$1.6 billion over a few years.**

Washington State

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics: Analysis and Recommendations Report to the Legislature January 2011

Estimated Costs for CCSS Implementation

Estimated State Level Costs	Per Fiscal Year	Five Year Total
2010-11 (FY 11)*	\$2,500,000	
2011-12 (FY 12)*	\$3,400,000	
2012-13 (FY 13)*	\$3,600,000	
2013-14 (FY 14)*	\$3,800,000	
2014-15 (FY 15)*	\$3,800,000	
Total Five Year Estimated State Level Costs		\$17,100,000
Estimated District Level Costs		
2010-11 (FY 11)*	\$25,300,000	
2011-12 (FY 12)*	\$29,600,000	
2012-13 (FY 13)*	\$35,100,000	
2013-14 (FY 14)*	\$41,800,000	
2014-15 (FY 15)*	\$33,700,000	
Total Five Year Estimated District Level Costs		\$165,500,000
Total Five Year Estimated State Level and District Level Costs		\$182,600,000

*Yearly cost estimates are from the [OSPI report](#). See Pages 24 and 29.

Funding Sources for CCSS Implementation

Funding Sources for the Implementation of the CCSS	Annual	Five Year Total
State Level Sources		
State Assessment Budget*	\$150,000	\$750,000
State Funding for Regional Mathematics Coordinators*	\$1,600,000	\$8,000,000
Title II, Part A, Teacher and Principal Quality (federal)*	\$510,000	\$2,550,000
Title II, Part B, Math Science Partnership Grant Funds (federal)*	\$125,000	\$625,000
School Improvement Grant Funds (federal)*	no amount provided	
SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia (SBAC) Supplemental Grant \$250,000-\$300,000 over four years*		\$300,000
Five Year Total of State Level Fund Sources		\$12,225,000
Estimated Five Year State Level Costs Total		\$17,100,000
Est. State Level Costs Minus State Level Fund Sources		\$4,875,000
District Level Sources*		
Basic Education Funding (state) #	Unable to determine	indeterminate
Title I (federal) and Learning Assistance Program (LAP, state) &	amounts	
Title II, Part A, Teacher and Principal		

Quality (federal) %
School Improvement Grant Funds
(SIG, federal) &
Title II, Part B, Math Science
Partnership Grant Funds (federal) @

The district level funding sources have been identified and listed above. Given the information in the report it is not possible to determine the amount of funds from any given source that would be allocated to support the implementation of the CCSS. Districts may have commitments for funds, or portions of funds, from any given source that would preclude them from being available to support the implementation of the CCSS.

Estimated Five Year District Level Costs Total **\$165,500,000**

* Fund source information is from the OSPI report. State level sources pages 25-26. District level sources pages 30-32.

Figures presented were not consistent and could not be used to determine any annual or five year total amount of funds available

& An unspecified portion of an undisclosed amount may be used by qualifying districts

% An unspecified portion of an undisclosed amount may be used according to individual district's comprehensive plan

@ WA receives \$2.5 million annually of which \$2 million may support implementation efforts

Tables from Where's the Money? pdf developed by The Underground Parent.

Missouri

Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
Frequently Asked Questions Common Core State Standards

As stated earlier, the Department has not requested additional or new funding for the implementation or professional development associated with revised standards and assessments.

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74 7

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Some states get cold feet as Common Core testing draws near

Adrienne Lu, Pew/Stateline Staff Writer 9:24 a.m. EST January 24, 2014



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Beginning in March, more than four million students will serve as guinea pigs for the English and math tests for the Common Core, a set of standards adopted by almost every state that map out what students should know and be able to do in each grade.

Ultimately, Common Core tests will be used to assess both students and teachers, and they are critical to the larger mission of the standards: to increase academic rigor for all students and to allow states to better

evaluate their students and compare them to those in other states.

The testing that will take place starting in March will serve as a dry run for the two groups of states that have banded together to develop Common Core tests, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). In most states, the real Common Core tests will begin in 2015.

But as controversy over the Common Core has challenged some states' commitment to the standards, a number of states have decided to withdraw from PARCC or Smarter Balanced or to use alternative tests, raising questions about the cost of the tests and the long-term viability of the multistate testing groups, which received \$360 million in federal grants to develop the tests. The federal grants will end this fall, and it is unclear whether the testing groups will continue past that point.

"What gets tested is what gets taught," said Joan Herman, co-director emeritus of the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing at UCLA. "To the extent that the assessments well represent the spirit and meaning of the standards, the spirit and meaning of the standards will get taught. Where the assessments fall short, curriculum, instruction and teaching will likely fall short as well."

COST CONCERNS

Controversy over the Common Core heated up last year across the country. Critics from both ends of the political spectrum cited a variety of complaints, including the fear of federal control over education, questions about whether Common Core is superior to previous state standards and worries about the implementation of the standards, including the cost to states and school districts.

So far, none of the 45 states that adopted the English and math standards has dropped them (Minnesota adopted only the English standards). But several states have backed off from using the tests created by the two multi-state testing groups or ended their participation in the collaborations.

In December, Kansas withdrew from the Smarter Balanced coalition, opting instead to commission tests from the University of Kansas. Earlier this month, Alaska also announced it would withdraw from Smarter Balanced and instead use tests from the University of Kansas. In September, Florida Gov. Rick Scott, a Republican, ordered the state's education department to withdraw from PARCC and consider other test options. Utah withdrew from Smarter Balanced in 2012. Georgia and Oklahoma withdrew from PARCC last summer. Alabama, which had been a member of both Smarter Balanced and PARCC, withdrew from both groups; Pennsylvania has said it will use its own tests.

Some of the states have expressed concerns about the cost of the tests. PARCC has estimated its test will cost \$29.50 per student – about the median its member states now pay for standardized tests; Smarter Balanced has estimated its test will cost \$22.50 per student for the end-of-year exam and \$27.30 per student including mid-year exams, less than current standardized test costs in two-thirds of the member states.

"Cost is an issue because it takes money to innovate," Herman said. "You can't just do that with no resources, you have to be able to invest in research and development and in the development and testing of new forms of assessment."

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Herman said both PARCC and Smarter Balanced are breaking new ground in developing student tests.



"They are moving us forward in addressing deeper learning to solve problems and to think critically," Herman said. "No doubt some folks don't think they're far enough, but in my mind, they're definitely an important step forward and will provide much better targets for instructions than do most existing state tests."

Historically, most state standardized tests have focused on the knowledge and skills that are relatively simple to test and don't reflect a great depth of learning, said James Pellegrino, co-director of Learning Sciences Research Institute at the University of Illinois at Chicago and a leading expert on student assessment.

Pellegrino said that because every child is now tested every year from third through eighth grades and once in high school, and because the tests must be secure, new test items must be generated constantly.

"You get into a mode of mass production and mass production doesn't always get tuned to the highest levels of quality," Pellegrino said. "It's not like you couldn't do it, but it's very costly to produce high-quality assessments on an ongoing basis with the sort of scope and scale" used in the U.S.

States that try to cut the cost of tests too much could pay the price, Pellegrino warned. "If we have shallow tests because we're trying to economize, teachers will respond to the test because they're held accountable for performance on the test," Pellegrino said. "As a consequence, they won't teach to the standards, they'll teach to the test."

From the beginning, Smarter Balanced and PARCC have promised smarter tests that will evaluate how well students apply knowledge. Instead of multiple-choice questions, for example, students might be given "performance tasks," or groups of test questions designed around a common theme and built to assess more complex skills.

Jacqueline E. King, a spokeswoman for Smarter Balanced, said that in addition to end-of-the-year exams, Smarter Balanced will offer a package of materials including ways to assess student learning throughout the school year, along with extensive resources for teachers, such as model lesson plans.

On the end-of-year exams, King said high school students might be asked to imagine being a staff member in a congressman's office. The congressman has asked the staffer to write a short memo explaining the pros and cons of nuclear power and provide a recommendation on what position the congressman should take, including the justification for the recommendation. The student would be given background materials to read and would need to evaluate the credibility of the background materials before constructing a cogent, concise argument.

David Connerty-Marin, a spokesman for PARCC, said the group's tests will have several advantages over most current state standardized tests. They will, for example, make it easier to evaluate students who are significantly above or below grade level. They also will evaluate reading and writing scores at every grade (currently, few states test writing at every grade level) and gauge whether students are on track to be "college ready" when they graduate from high school.

MULTIPLE ADVANTAGES

In Michigan, which has seen its share of controversy over the Common Core, Joseph Martineau, the deputy superintendent for accountability services, said the Smarter Balanced exams offer multiple advantages over the current state standardized test, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Smarter Balanced will allow schools to get results in two weeks, compared to about six weeks for the state's current standardized test, for example. And because the Smarter Balanced exams are different for each student, with computers adjusting the difficulty level of questions based on students' responses, they can also be administered over a longer period, whereas the previous state tests had to be administered on a single day to prevent cheating.

On the MEAP, students might be asked to choose a correct answer from four possible options, whereas on the Common Core test, they would be asked to explain how they arrived at their answer.

"One of the major differences between the two is the depth of knowledge that we're asking students to demonstrate," Martineau said.

Martineau said that by working with the other states in Smarter Balanced, Michigan was able to develop a higher-quality test than it could have created independently.

"We would not have been able to afford to develop the kind of quality that was developed through the consortium," he said.

Matthew Chingos, a researcher at the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution, estimates that even if several of the states where the Common Core has stirred up a lot of debate withdraw from the testing collaborations, the cost of the tests would increase at most by a few dollars per student. He concludes that given that U.S. schools spend about \$10,500 per student annually, worrying about whether a test costs \$15 or \$45 to measure how much a student is learning "seems almost silly."

Some states get cold feet as Common Core testing draws near

Some point out, however, that the nature of the Common Core exam makes it more expensive than a typical test. Theodore Rebarber, CEO of AccountabilityWorks, a nonprofit that supports accountability and assessment systems, said cost projections should include expenses such as additional computers and the expanded bandwidth necessary for the Common Core exams.

"There are a lot of hopes that online assessment would lower costs but what we're seeing here is the testing costs from the consortia are not particularly low," Rebarber said. He advised states to examine whether the Smarter Balanced and PARCC tests are really innovative, and how much they will actually cost states to implement.

Some argue policymakers should take a step back and reconsider the larger question of why we test students at all, which will in turn drive changes to the tests.

Pellegrino, of University of Illinois at Chicago, co-authored a policy statement by the Gordon Commission on the Future of Assessment in Education urging "a fundamental shift in thinking about the purposes of assessment."

"Many of us believe we need to rethink some of this – it's not that we don't need to use assessments to monitor how well students are learning, but most of that should be targeted at the classroom level for supporting the teaching and learning process and not be so much a part of a high-stakes accountability system," Pellegrino said.

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2. Is the Common Core already being implemented?

All 50 states except Alaska and Texas initially committed to the development of common state standards when the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officials launched their efforts to write the Common Core on June 1, 2009.¹ At that time, individual states reserved the right to determine whether to formally adopt the finalized standards.

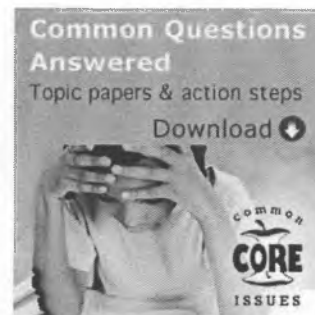
Forty-five states, four territories, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted the Common Core State Standards since their release on June 2, 2010. Minnesota adopted only the English language arts standards.² All 45 states adopting both sets of standards became members of one or both of the consortia developing standardized assessments. These states thus committed to fully implement the standards and replace their state assessments with whatever tests the consortia produce.³ Alaska, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia have refused to adopt the Common Core. The Texas legislature confirmed its unequivocal opposition by rejecting the standards on a 140–2 vote.⁴

Despite the states' rapid adoption of the Common Core, implementing the standards in public schools has been gradual. A study conducted by two education policy firms found that in 2011, just seven of the 45 states that had adopted the Common Core had fully developed plans for implementing the standards. In 2012, only 14 more states had produced complete plans.⁵

Even though some states have not adopted the Common Core and many have been slow to implement its provisions, the Common Core is already impacting students across the country. The Common Core was consulted as a curriculum authority in the formulation of the National Sexuality Education Standards.⁶ In the name of the Common Core's sophisticated writing expectations, a high school teacher in New York tasked her students with persuading her in five paragraphs or less that Jews are evil and that she should be loyal to the Third Reich.⁷

As the possibility of widespread impact becomes increasingly apparent and the pedagogical weakness of the standards is exposed, states that originally adopted the standards are scrambling to delay or defund implementation. It is also becoming clear that the predicted cost of implementing the Common Core is much higher than the amount of money the Department of Education used to persuade states to accept de facto national standards and assessments.⁸

The Michigan legislature passed a budget bill cutting off funding for implementation of the Common Core on June 4, 2013.⁹ Legislators in New York and Pennsylvania are also pushing such bills, although similar legislation failed to pass in Alabama and Georgia.¹⁰ Governor Mike Pence of Indiana signed a bill on May 8, 2013, that delays implementation until public hearings on the Common Core can be held.¹¹ A similar bill in Missouri failed to pass, but a similar bill was introduced in the Florida House of Representatives on August 28, 2013.¹² Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett has ordered schools to discontinue plans to implement the Common Core until he can consult with lawmakers.¹³ Legislation was introduced in the Kansas legislature on February 11, 2013, to prevent the use of Common Core-related materials and assessments created in 2013 until the legislature can evaluate and approve them in 2014, but this bill failed to pass.¹⁴ Bills in Oklahoma and North Carolina would stall implementation until the cost of implementing the standards and their academic quality have been more thoroughly explored.¹⁵ A bill introduced in the Ohio General Assembly would prevent the state board of education from adopting the Common Core and the state department of education from implementing the standards.¹⁶ A bill presented to the New Jersey Senate would create a task force to evaluate the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career assessments and prohibit use of the tests until the task force's final report is submitted.¹⁷ Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Oklahoma, and Utah have withdrawn from the state consortia developing assessments aligned to the Common Core standards.¹⁸



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[Glossary of Terms](#)

1. What is the Common Core?
2. Is the Common Core already being implemented?
3. How is the federal government involved in the Common Core?
4. Does the Common Core have a philosophical bias?
5. Does the Common Core provide for individualized education?
6. Is there any evidence that centralized education works better than decentralized education?
7. Will the Common Core impact homeschools and private schools?
8. Does the Common Core lead to a national curriculum?
9. Does it matter that testing is being aligned with the Common Core?
10. Does the Common Core include a national database?

Document updated October 15, 2013

¹ "NGA and CCSSO Comment on CCSS Governance Suggestions," Common Core State Standards Initiative, accessed June 10, 2013, <http://www.corestandards.org/articles/9-nga-and-ccsso-comment-on-ccssi-governance-suggestions>.

² See "In the States," Common Core Standards State Initiative, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>.

³ Tabitha Grossman, Ryan Reyna, and Stephanie Shipton, *Realizing the Potential: How Governors Can Lead Effective Implementation of the Common Core State Standards* (National Governors Association, 2011), 10, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1110CCSSIMPLEMENTATIONGUIDE.PDF>.

⁴ Shane Vander Hart, "Texas House Makes It Clear: No Common Core Here!" *Truth in American Education* (May 7, 2013), accessed June 8, 2013, <http://truthinamericaneducation.com/common-core-state-standards/texas-house-makes-it-clear-no-common-core-here/>.

⁵ Education First and Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, *A National Perspective on States' Progress in Common Core State Standards Implementation Planning* (2013), 6, http://www.edweek.org/media/movingforward_ef_epe_020413.pdf. Three key areas of implementation were considered in this study: teacher professional development, curriculum guides or instructional material, and teacher-evaluation system.

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⁸ In Texas, Race to the Top funding would have amounted to about \$75 per student. The cost of implementing the Common Core in Texas would be approximately \$635 per student. See Rick Perry, Letter to the Honorable Arne Duncan, Office of the Governor, January 13, 2010, accessed June 10, 2013, <http://governor.state.tx.us/files/press-office/O-DuncanArne201001130344.pdf>.

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¹¹ Valerie Strauss, "Indiana Halts Common Core Implementation," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2013, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/05/13/indiana-halts-common-core-implementation/>.

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¹⁵ "OK HB1907 | 2013 | Regular Session," LegiScan, June 8, 2013, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://legiscan.com/OK/bill/HB1907/2013>; Rachel Sheffield, "North Carolina Questions Common Core," *Heartland Institute*, April 26, 2013, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2013/04/26/north-carolina-questions-common-core>.

¹⁶ Ohio General Assembly, H.B. No. 237, 130th General Assembly, Regular Session, 2013-14, accessed August 20, 2013, http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB237.

¹⁷ S2973, New Jersey 215th Legislature, Regular Session, 2013-14, accessed October 4, 2013, http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2012/Bills/S3000/2973_11.HTM.

¹⁸ Evelyn B. Stacey, "Alabama Exits National Common Core Tests," *Heartland Institute*, February 13, 2013, accessed June 8, 2013, <http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2013/02/13/alabama-exits-national-common-core-tests>; "Governor Rick Scott Announces Path Forward for High Education Standards," Rick Scott 45th Governor of Florida, September 23, 2013, accessed October 4, 2013, <http://www.flgov.com/2013/09/23/governor-rick-scott-announces-path-forward-for-high-education-standards-decision-to-withdraw-from-parcc/>; "Georgia Withdrawing from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) Consortium," July 22, 2013, accessed August 1, 2013, <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?PressView=default&pid=123>; Indiana Governor Mike Pence, "Governor Pence Announces Intent to Withdraw Indiana as a Member from the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Governing Board," news release, July 29, 2013, accessed August 16, 2013, http://www.in.gov/activecalendar/EventList.aspx?fromdate=7/29/2013&todate=7/29/2013&display=Day&type=public&eventid=115942&view=EventDetails&information_id=185774; Andrea Eger, "Oklahoma to Drop Testing Consortium, Develop Own Tests, Barresi Says," *Tulsa World*, July 2, 2013, accessed July 10, 2013, http://www.tulsaworld.com/article.aspx/Oklahoma_to_drop_testing_consor_tium_develop_own_tests/20130702_11_A1_CUTLIN399354; "Utah Withdraws from Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Developing Common Core Tests," *Huffington Post*, August 7, 2012, accessed June 8, 2013, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/07/utah-withdraws-from-smart_n_1752261.html.

11. Who supports the Common Core and why?

12. Who opposes the Common Core and why?



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Millions slated for Common Core roll out

Board says preliminary spending boosts technology, teacher training

By Luke Money
Signal Staff Writer
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661-287-5525
January 26, 2014

With a series of new educational guidelines slated to take hold soon, officials in the William S. Hart Union High School District are in the process of developing a plan to spend millions in one-time state funding to help with the transition. The Hart district received about \$4.6 million in state funding that can be spent to help ease the transition into the new educational metrics, known as the Common Core State Standards.

Those standards are required to be in place for the 2014-2015 academic year.

A preliminary plan on how to spend the state funds was presented during Wednesday's Hart district board meeting.

"This is a preliminary plan that will be evolving over time as we learn new information," wrote district spokeswoman Gail Pinsker in an email. "We will continue to share with the board as we update the plan."

Some of the larger aspects of Common Core — a set of uniform metrics meant to standardize curriculum between different states — are its emphases on the use of technology in the classrooms and teaching core subject concepts, with particular attention paid to real-world application of classroom concepts and critical thinking.

To that end, the preliminary proposal for the Hart district is to use just north of \$2 million in state funding to help in its technological pursuits, according to Vicki Engbrecht, the district's deputy superintendent.

The preliminary spending plan also includes spending roughly \$2 million on professional development to better prepare to use the technology and effectively teach the Common Core standards.

"I think technology is cool, but we need to make the teachers feel comfortable with what they are doing in the classroom," Engbrecht said.

Part of the district's professional development efforts are pupil-free days that were scheduled throughout this school year to provide teachers and staff with additional time to familiarize themselves with the Common Core standards.

The next such day is planned for Feb. 14, when teachers will have the chance to participate in a symposium on Common Core.

Hart district officials also suggested using approximately \$510,000 in state funds on instructional materials, such as new math textbooks.

The district has set aside other funds to help cover the cost of purchasing textbooks.

Lmoney@signalscv.com

<http://www.signalscv.com/section/36/article/113192/>

EDUCATION WEEK

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COMMENTARY

Trimming the Cost of Common-Core Implementation

By Patrick J. Murphy and Elliot M. Regenstein

The Common Core State Standards are designed to have a transformative effect on teaching and learning in the United States. But, as we all know, the 46 states and the District of Columbia that have adopted the common core are just beginning the journey of implementation. A great deal of thoughtful work is required to implement the standards successfully, and that work will not come without a price tag.

As the adopting states develop and launch plans for the common core, they are almost universally shying away from honest discussions about how much those plans are going to cost. We believe that a frank conversation about the expense of this work is necessary, largely because state leaders who make smart choices can shepherd the process in a cost-effective manner.

As we argued in our recent **report**, "Putting a Price Tag on the Common Core: How Much Will Smart Implementation Cost?," the statewide cost of bringing the common core to classrooms could be reduced significantly if states were willing to rethink implementation. Our report focuses on three key areas of expense: new instructional materials, new assessments, and professional development. While we realize that even the most efficient approach is likely to lead to some new expenses, we believe that states can minimize the cost by taking advantage of emerging best practices and consciously repurposing existing state funding streams focused on these areas.

Our paper attempts to estimate the cost of transition during the initial implementation phase. We first estimated the expenses associated with a business-as-usual scenario, in which states simply spend more on traditional delivery methods—hard-copy textbooks, face-to-face professional development, and paper-based standardized tests. Such an approach would, according to our calculations, require an additional \$12

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"State leaders who make smart choices can shepherd [standards] implementation in

billion in spending across the 46 states and the District of Columbia, or an average increase of \$289 in per-student spending. Don't let sticker shock set in. This group of states already spends about \$525 billion in federal, state, and local funds on education in a single year. The increase here would represent less than 3 percent of that figure.

a cost-effective manner."

But the common core will only cost that much to implement if states make no effort to reduce incremental costs of materials, assessments, and professional development. With some changes in approach—what we call "balanced implementation"—the total cost could drop to less than half the estimate: roughly \$5.1 billion, or \$121 per student. And if we consider the fact that some existing resources could be repurposed, the additional net cost for states could be even lower, likely less than \$100 per student.

What does our balanced-implementation scenario look like? Our ideas include:

- **Moving away from hard-copy textbooks and doing more sharing of online materials.**

New platforms are available for self-publishing textbooks, and opportunities have grown whereby educators can collaborate beyond their districts to develop great materials. We can already see examples of cross-state sharing of curriculum and materials, such as the tri-state materials-sharing platform utilized by Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island. Florida has begun to look for ways to move away from hard-copy textbooks. And advances in technology are easing the production and use of e-readers and electronic textbooks, as well as online-resource exchanges.

- **Using computer-administered technology to offer formative assessments.** The federally funded testing consortia, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, or PARCC, and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, are in the process of creating new, universal assessment tools. States should take advantage of these resources, rather than try to reinvent the wheel when it comes to testing.



- **Delivering professional development through a mix of in-person and online instruction.** Customized professional development should address the needs of individual teachers, including specific gaps in knowledge and areas needing growth. Online libraries of training videos are another resource that can provide teachers with access to relevant professional development. Charter managers, such as New Tech Network, have designed professional-development modules that serve more schools more effectively and facilitate higher-quality conversations among teachers who share similar content and instructional goals.

Leading states, districts, and charter providers have adopted these practices and are finding that they can maintain or increase instructional quality while lowering costs. West Virginia and Utah, for example, are using their top teachers to help develop professional-development units and making those available on a dedicated website. These states are not treating common-core implementation as something above and beyond their usual use of materials, assessments, and

professional-development practices. Instead, they are viewing the transition to the common core as an opportunity to adapt their practices in an effort to deliver 21st-century education.

• **States, districts, and charter providers must be willing to stop purchasing goods and services from their existing vendors if they don't meet their current needs, and seek out new vendors willing to take advantage of the opportunities the new standards present.** These practices could be cost-effective even if the new standards were not being implemented as widely, but the *commonness* of the common core has the potential to restructure these markets dramatically, thus opening up a host of new opportunities, including cross-state resource sharing. The conditions are ripe for locally developed curricular modules, lesson plans, formative assessments, and professional-development resources to have a national impact.

Some analyses have portrayed the common core as a restrictive policy change that will hamstring educational professionals. They miss the point. The commonality of the standards should be a blessing for individual classroom teachers, allowing them access to resources that meet their unique needs. The common standards, coupled with 21st-century technology, have the potential to create a new kind of community of districts, school leaders, and teachers—a community liberated to improve instruction in ways that were once thought to be impossible.

We are aware of critics who estimate a shocking price tag for implementation. During lean budgetary times, these dramatic figures can give some pause about moving forward with the core. While states *could* spend that much money on implementation, they don't have to. Tightened purse strings should force states to seek cost-effective solutions that make the best use of funds while leading to the use of high-quality instructional materials, assessments, and professional development.

Implementing the common core won't be cheap, but the expense will be worth it if it leads to improved teaching and learning.



Patrick J. Murphy is a professor of politics at the University of San Francisco. His research focuses on public management, finance, and public-policy issues. He is a senior research affiliate at the Center on Reinventing Public Education, which is located in Seattle, and an adjunct fellow at the San Francisco-based Public Policy Institute of California. Elliot M. Regenstein is a partner at the Chicago-based law firm EducationCounsel LLC. He provides legal, policy, strategic-planning, and advocacy services to governments, foundations, and nonprofit organizations. From 2004 to 2006, he served as the director of education reform for the state of Illinois.

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January 26, 2014

HUFF
POST EDUCATION

Would You Like Fries With Your iPad?

Posted: 01/21/2014 5:41 pm

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Prior to the LAUSD vote January 14, 2014 to approve Phase II of the district's \$1 billion iPad project, I shared the following remarks with school board members during the three minutes allotted each speaker during Public Comment:

Good afternoon, board members, Superintendent, sorry about that [jumping the gun], I was looking for my iPad. Part of this discussion about iPads has been framed as -- I'm David Lyell, UTLA Secretary -- it's been framed as a debate about who should and should not have access to technology. No one is opposed to providing students with access to technology. This project really isn't about technology. This is about providing a vehicle for students to conveniently complete common core state standards testing.

The problem with this whole focus on testing is that taking tests in and of itself doesn't really teach you anything other than how to press a button or how to fill in a bubble. It doesn't teach you critical thinking skills. And, speaking as an individual, that's part of the problem with Common Core State Standards. We had No Child Left Behind and then Race to the Top. Now we have Common Core State Standards. Because they say, well, it'll be transformational. Because, after all, if students can't pass the current tests, the solution must be to give students different tests. Obviously, that's completely not true.

The iPad project goes to the heart of this issue and instead we need to focus on teaching students the basics of learning how to read, write, add, and subtract, and develop critical thinking skills. Those skills are developed through asking questions. Those questions only get asked when you lower class size, fully staff campuses, honor due process rights, pay employees a fair living wage, and expose students to a well-rounded curriculum. Yet teachers in LAUSD remain near the bottom of all teacher pay in LA County, due process is often not being honored, and the idea of providing students with essential supports and services -- smaller class sizes and fully staffed campuses -- have all but been dismissed by the board.

Computers are everywhere nowadays. But in the end, in and of itself, giving students iPads isn't going to necessarily help them learn how to use computers. If you go to a fast food restaurant, the person who takes the order is going to do so by pressing a button on a computer. On an iPad.

There's a great documentary called *The Lost Interview*, and the subject is Steve Jobs, one of the founders of Apple Computers. And in the documentary, he says at one point, when he talks about computer science and his desire to learn computers, quote, 'It had nothing to do with using [programs] for practical things, it had more to do with using them as a mirror of your thought process. To actually learn how to think. I think everyone in this country should learn to program a computer. Everyone should learn a computer language because it teaches you how to think. I think of computer science as a liberal art.' End-quote.

So by giving students iPads, are we training them to develop critical thinking skills, or are we just preparing them for a life working in fast food restaurants?

As a district, in order to improve student achievement, we need to maximize every last tax dollar at our disposal, and spend that money in a responsible way. Responsible policy means focusing time and energy on lowering class size, making sure every student has access to a full-time nurse, librarian, pupil services and attendance counselor, psychiatric social worker, arts, etcetera. I see my time is up, so in closing, with all due respect, for this and other reasons, while I'm glad to see the district slowed down on this proposal, it just doesn't feel like it's been handled in a very responsible manner. Thank you.

After I finished my remarks to the Board, Superintendent Deasy took the time to respond to my call to lower class size, raise teacher pay, and restore positions (I must have pushed some of his buttons). He insisted that my remarks were off base because the bond money being used for iPads can't fund those things, but he ignored what we know to be true: Once the bond money dries up, the District intends to use general fund dollars to pay for the iPads (*L.A. Times*: <http://lat.ms/1f6jedi>). Raises, rehiring staff, and lower class sizes *do* come from general fund money.

Here's video of my remarks, as well as his response: (*Youtube*: <http://bit.ly/1e9eAZW>)

With rare exception, school board meetings are calendared during the day, so teachers involved with Phase I of the project haven't even had an opportunity to address the board, and numerous other questions have arisen about the lack of responsible oversight concerning this project. A few examples...

The district only reluctantly admitted to paying for a three-year software license before it had even actually seen what it was purchasing (L.A. Times: <http://lat.ms/1akJZgA>).

It was also recently revealed that some staff members were given free iPads a year before the board voted for Phase I of this project, at a pitch meeting by software peddler Pearson. (KPCC: <http://bit.ly/1dKDm7S>).

So, who's investigating? LAUSD's Office of the Inspector General. In other words, when possible impropriety arises, the district has authority to investigate itself.

As if all of this isn't alarming enough, LAUSD announced this past week that the only committee charged with overseeing the iPad rollout is set to be disbanded. (LATimes: <http://lat.ms/1aFsYeO>).

California is facing many challenges, and bond measures will be needed to be approved in the future. But when LAUSD conducts business behind closed doors -- in secret -- as it did so in voting to extend the Superintendent's contract, and only agrees to release that board vote after being threatened with possible legal action, for this, and the aforementioned reasons, as well as other concerns, these actions only further erode an already tenuous relationship between the board and an already skeptical electorate (L.A. Times:<http://lat.ms/1ihjVFE>).

I know board members care deeply about public education. But as recently deceased board member Ms. Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte said about students, and I think you could apply this to the board's relationship with the public: "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Ms. LaMotte will be greatly missed.

Follow David Lyell on Twitter: www.twitter.com/davidlyell

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Rene Diedrich (Ariel_Bonzai)
SUPER USER · 457 Fans · Naked is the best disguise.

UTLA leadership has been less than vociferous about this and compromises of AFT,UTF and NEA, heck I can't even keep track of all of them, have cost teachers dearly--particularly in large urban districts like LAUSD. By conceding to Common Core and accepting big \$\$\$ from Gates, Walton and Broad, these unions sold us out and the local unions are conspicuously indifferent to our plight. Well, essentially everyone is indifferent or downright acrimonious to teachers because people assume unions have their backs. The truth is the unions are behind teachers, all right. They are just there to shove them into an abyss Arne Duncan calls an achievement gap. Teachers are not afforded basic considerations, much less acknowledged as professionals. Teachers are endangered and harmed on campus, where principals won't call an ambulance for them. They're defamed, cheated, mentally assaulted, discriminated against, harassed, and literally ruined when they report corruption or abuse. Of course come close to vesting in a full pension and there is a target on your back... Some have died from EXTREME stress, many have lost their careers, houses, hope. That is egregious. I wanna puke when Deasy pulls an astro turf. Then there's media, which has no interest in hearing teachers, yet fawns over the blatant incompetence, criminal indifference and unethical arrogance that is LAUSD Deasy. I say keep the iPads. Lose Deasy and UTLA.

21 JAN 7:16 PM

REPLY FAVE MORE

Eric Pollock (Eric_J_Pollock)
93 Fans · AP English Teacher

At least they will be able to play more games, socialize, and waste more time. And it only cost the school district 1 billion dollars. That is a bargain.

22 JAN 9:01 AM

Why so many parents hate Common Core

By Diane Ravitch

updated 7:52 AM EST, Mon November 25, 2013

CNN.com



TIM BOYLE/GETTY IMAGES

A teacher assists her students in Chicago. Illinois is one of 45 states that adopted Common Core educational standards.

Editor's note: Diane Ravitch is research professor of education at New York University and a historian of education. She is the author of more than a dozen books about education, including the recent bestseller "Reign of Error: The Hoax of the Privatization Movement and The Danger to America's Public Schools."

(CNN) -- The U.S. Department of Education is legally prohibited from having any control over curriculum or instruction in the nation's public schools, but nonetheless Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is a zealous advocate of the new Common Core standards for students' proficiency in English and math.

First, he said their critics were members of extremist groups, and he recently assailed the parents who criticize them as "white suburban moms who — all of a sudden — their child isn't as brilliant as they thought they were, and their school isn't quite as good as they thought they were."

His remarks were prompted by the nearly unanimous outrage expressed by parents -- moms and dads -- at public forums in suburban districts in New York, following the release of the abysmal results of the new Common Core tests.

The parents weren't angry because they found out their child wasn't brilliant, but because most were told by the state that their children were failures. Only 31% of the state's students in grades third through eighth passed or exceeded the new tests. Among students who are English-language learners, only 3% passed the English standards; among students with disabilities, only 5% passed them; among black and Hispanic students, fewer than 20%

passed. The numbers for math were better, but not by much.

The high failure rate did not happen because the students are dumb, but because the state chose to set an unrealistic passing mark. The state commissioner knew before any student had taken the test that only 30% or so would pass; that is where the state commissioner set the passing mark.

Duncan likes to boast that the Common Core standards were adopted by 45 states, but neglects to mention that the states were required to adopt "college-and-career-ready standards" to be eligible for \$4.35 billion in the education secretary's signature program called Race to the Top.

Some states adopted them without seeing a finished draft. The standards, unfortunately, were never field-tested. No one knew in advance whether they would improve achievement or depress it, whether they would widen or narrow the achievement gap among children of different races. It is hard to imagine a major corporation releasing a new product nationwide without first testing it among consumers to see if it is successful. But that is what happened with the Common Core standards.

Experts in early childhood education say the standards for young children are developmentally inappropriate. Teachers say that they have not had the training or resources to teach the new standards. Field-testing would have ironed out many of the bugs, but promoters of the standards insisted on fast implementation.

No one yet has estimated the costs of shifting from state standards to national standards. Duncan awarded \$350 million to develop new tests for the new standards, but all of the testing will be done online.



Arne Duncan remark irks suburban moms



Sec. Duncan: My wording was clumsy

Los

Angeles intends to spend \$1 billion on iPads for the Common Core Technology Project, designed to help prepare for the standards. If that is the cost to only one district, how many billions will schools across the nation pay for software and hardware and bandwidth for Common Core testing? This will be a bonanza for the technology industry, but will put a strain on public school budgets in a time of austerity.

The Common Core standards emphasize critical thinking and reasoning. It is time for public officials to demonstrate critical thinking and to stop the rush to implementation and do some serious field-testing.

It is time to fix the standards that don't work in real classrooms with real students. It is time to stop testing students on material they have not been taught. American students take more tests than students in any other nation. Our dependence on standardized testing has become excessive.

Standards alone can't right everything that needs fixing in American education, and some experts, like Tom Loveless at Brookings Institution, say they will make little or no difference in student achievement.

Public officials should listen to the moms and dads. This is a democracy, and it is not the role of public officials to impose their grand ideas without the consent of the governed.

The opinions expressed in this commentary are solely those of Diane Ravitch.

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Stop Common Core Illinois

*A community of concerned citizens
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Rotten to the (Common) Core part 2 #stopcommoncore

Posted on [January 24, 2014](#)

by [Chris Mercogliano](#),

The soiled underbelly of the Common Core State Standards is just beginning to come into view. For starters, according to an ongoing [series of posts by investigative blogger Mercedes Schneider](#), dating back to October, 2013, the idea that the Common Core State Standards, unlike the old NCLB version, were developed at the state level through a transparent process involving teachers, principals, parents, and education experts is a complete sham. The CCSS were actually “prefabricated,” as Schneider puts it, under another name in 2004 by Achieve, Inc., an allegedly independent, nonpartisan, and not-for-profit education reform organization that in reality is none of the above.

It turns out that Achieve is closely aligned with the American Legislative Exchange Council, a right-wing political organization well known for its efforts to privatize public education and bring about other “market-based” education reforms. ALEC has been one of Achieve’s major funders since day one; and, in turn, according to [a flow chart of CCSS corporate connections](#) compiled by education activist and journalist Morna McDermott and published in Truthout on 1/10/2014, the majority of ALEC’s funds come from Charles and David Koch, billionaire oil tycoons whose far-reaching political agenda includes privatizing public education and defunding public schools.

Following CCSS’s far from transparent money trail, Schneider and McDermott also uncovered a deeply embedded economic agenda. The web of financial interconnections is far too tangled to detail here; but a closer look at the business dealings of the three lead authors of the final CCSS language gives us an excellent tip-of-the-iceberg view of the extent to which CCSS, in Schneider’s words, is little more than a “multi-layered business deal.” Moreover, it is one that stands to profit the education industry at levels that will make the NCLB bonanza look, getting back to Chicken Little, like poultry feed.

In 2009 David Coleman, Jason Zimba, and Sue Pimentel formed the not-for-profit corporation Student Achievement Partners for the sole purpose of drafting and promoting CCSS. All three had already been profiting handsomely from the standards movement for years. For instance, in 2004 Coleman and Zimba founded the Grow Network, an education technology company that provides customized test reports and instructional materials to schools and families, and then sold it to McGraw-Hill later in 2009 for a figure rumored by insiders to be as high as \$14 million.

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School Rankings Prove The Common Core Initiative Does Not Improve Education Quality #stopcommoncore

Posted on [January 24, 2014](#)

The Free Patriot -

Education Week came out with their rankings of the states with the best and worst schools. They make their ratings on a variety of factors which include K-12 achievement; standards, assessment and accountability; the teaching profession; school finance; students' chances for long-term success; and transitions and alignment.

The top schools were (descending order) Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Vermont, Minnesota, Florida, Pennsylvania, Washington, Colorado, Virginia.

The worst schools (worst to least worst) were Mississippi, Louisiana, New Mexico, West Virginia, Alabama, Alaska, South Carolina, South Dakota, Michigan, Oklahoma.

One conclusion from the study has damning ramifications for the Common Core Initiative. The conclusion is that standards have almost no impact on student achievement.

*There is a surprising lack of correlation between the state's K-12 achievement and the presence of policies Education Week identified as important. Five of the 10 states with the **best achievement scores are among the worst in the country for setting standards and using assessment techniques** that are most likely to be effective, according to Education Week. Meanwhile, Louisiana and West Virginia are the second- and third-best states for standards, but they are both among the five worst states in student achievement.*

It is particularly damning because states like Mississippi, Louisiana, and New Mexico have been the most faithful at implementing the Common Core. They are three years into implementing the Common Core, yet they are at the bottom. Massachusetts has paused Common Core, and they have been at the top of education ranks for many years due to result of policies put into place by Sandra Stotsky and others in the late 1990s. In addition, Minnesota only adopted the English Language Arts standards, and rejected the Common Core math. New Hampshire's largest school district rejected the Common Core and many school districts in that state have followed. Virginia has also rejected the Common Core.

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What States Have Pulled Out of their Common Core Assessment Consortium?

Posted on [January 24, 2014](#)

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Truth in American Education -

We wanted to provide a complete list in one location of all the states that have pulled out of either Smarter Balanced or PARCC, as well as, states that are considering it.

States that have pulled out of their Assessment Consortium:

1. Utah (Smarter Balanced) – <http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/mobile/54627081-68/utah-state-standards-consortium.html.csp>
2. Oklahoma (PARCC) – <http://truthinamericaneducation.com/common-core-assessments/oklahoma-pulls-out-of-parcc/> (the Tulsa World article is no longer on the website).
3. Georgia (PARCC) – <http://www.aic.com/news/news/breaking-news/georgia-decides-against-offering-common-core-stand/nYzDr/>
4. Alabama (Smarter Balanced & PARCC – they were an advisory state) – http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/02/alabama_withdraws_from_both_te.html
5. Indiana (PARCC) – <http://truthinamericaneducation.com/common-core-assessments/pence-pulls-indiana-out-of-parcc/> and <http://indianapublicmedia.org/stateimpact/2013/07/29/gov-pence-signals-intent-to-withdraw-from-common-core-consortium-parcc/> As of December PARCC still had them listed though – <http://hoosiersagainstandcommoncore.com/indianas-withdraw-parcc-real-show/>
6. Kansas (Smarter Balanced) – <http://m.cionline.com/news/2013-12-10/kansas-opts-create-its-own-common-core-tests>
7. Pennsylvania (Smarter Balanced & PARCC) – http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/06/pennsylvania_signals_departure_from_test_consortia.htm
8. Alaska (Smarter Balanced) – http://www.newsminer.com/news/education/alaska-changes-school-testing-consortium/article_05509298-7d77-11e3-9606-001a4bcf6878.html
9. Florida (PARCC) - <http://truthinamericaneducation.com/common-core-assessments/rick-scott-pulls-florida-out-of-parcc/>

States Actively Considering Withdrawing

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Governors Race to the Drop (of Common Core) #stopcommoncore

Posted on [January 23, 2014](#)

Truth in American Education -

by Shane Vander Hart,

I have to admit. I didn't coin that title; credit goes to Heather Crossin who coined it in an email. We have had a couple of Governors make some statements about the Common Core as state legislatures go into session.

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Republican Governor Mike Pence of Indiana in his state of the state address last week said: “Hoosiers have high expectations when it comes to Indiana schools. That’s why Indiana decided to take a time-out on national education standards,” Pence said. “When it comes to setting standards for schools, I can assure you, Indiana’s will be uncommonly high. They will be written by Hoosiers, for Hoosiers and will be among the best in the nation.”

After the address Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz said “We always adopt our own standards. It just so happens that in 2010 the State Board of Education adopted the Common Core as its standards. We are reviewing those standards. I’m pretty confident there are going to be changes to those standards. And Indiana will be adopting a new set of standards.”

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Will Obama mention Common Core in the State of the Union? #stopcommoncore

Posted on [January 23, 2014](#)

Fordham Institute -

The rumor around the water coolers in D.C. is that President Obama plans to mention the Common Core State Standards in his State of the Union Address next week—for the third year running. He should reconsider, for three reasons.

First, it will feed the narrative that Common Core is, in fact, a federal takeover of public education.

Many Common Core opponents I debate on talk-radio shows or speak with in person eventually get around to admitting they have very few problems with the standards themselves and think they are better than what their state had in place before (we think so too). But, as [Andy Smarick](#) wrote earlier this week,

They are skeptical of big promises and big government. They are skeptical of centralized solutions. And they are skeptical of enlightened national leaders who pat them on their heads.

Remember, they were told by such enlightened leaders that if they liked their insurance, they could keep it. They are once bitten, twice shy.

Why would an administration that has already insulted Common Core opponents give them another reason to claim that this is true?

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Parents homeschooling children in response to Common Core standards #stopcommoncore

Posted on [January 21, 2014](#)

KAKE.com

WICHITA, Kan. – Just mention the Common Core and you’ll get a reaction from parents Justin and Jennifer Dahlmann.

“We both get a little tight in the chest,” Justin said.

The Dahlmann’s have four girls ranging in age from 2 to 9. They say they noticed the kids were beginning to struggle in school recently. They didn’t know why.

Then, Justin, a former educator, says they found out the new Common Core math and English standards had been implemented at their children’s private school.

“Our own kids were taking these standards that are driving the curriculum and we didn’t know anything about it,” Justin said. “That’s when we started doing the research on it and realized how overbearing it was.”

They say the standards are making education more confusing rather than helping students to think more critically, as supporters claim.

The Dahlmann’s are among a growing number of parents across the nation who have decided to homeschool their children in response to the implementation of those standards.

“We’ve said, ‘As soon as you drop the standards, we’ll put our kids right back in there,’” Justin said.

Kansas is one of 46 states that have adopted the standards. Proponents say educators from those states worked together several years ago to come up with a unified approach to what every student across the nation should know in English and math.

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The Common Core Gold Rush #stopcommoncore

Posted on [January 21, 2014](#)

The Tribune Papers Inc. -

by Michelle Malkin,

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The Common Core gold rush is on. Apple, Pearson, Google, Microsoft and Amplify are all cashing in on the federal standards/testing/textbook racket. But the EduTech boondoggle is no boon for students. It's more squandered tax dollars down the public school drain.

Even more worrisome: The stampede is widening a dangerous path toward invasive data mining.

According to the Silicon Valley Business Journal, the ed tech sector "is expected to more than double in size to \$13.4 billion by 2017." That explosive growth is fueled by Common Core's top-down digital learning and testing mandates. So: Cui bono?

In North Carolina, the Guilford County public school district withdrew 15,000 Amplify tablets last fall. Pre-loaded with Common Core apps and part of a federal \$30 million Race to the Top grant program, the devices peddled by News Corp. and Wireless Generation were rendered useless because of defective cases, broken screens and malfunctioning power supplies.

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