



[States should] defend their prerogatives by adopting 'the simple expedient of not yielding'
to federal blandishments when they do not want to embrace
the federal policies as their own. The States are separate and independent sovereigns.
Sometimes they have to act like it." - Chief Justice John Roberts

THE CASE FOR OPTING OUT OF COMMON CORE

RACE TO THE TOP (RTTT)

A FEDERAL TAKEOVER OF EDUCATION

March 2013

compiled by Rita B. Anderson

for the Central MS Tea Party

The Beginning of Common Core

The Gates Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided \$35 million in funds for the development and implementation of a new education system for the United States. Achieve, Inc. was established by these foundations to develop Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSI) and two NGO's were recruited to lend an appearance of a non-federal-government-driven initiative. CCSI was unveiled in December 2008. The two NGO's were:

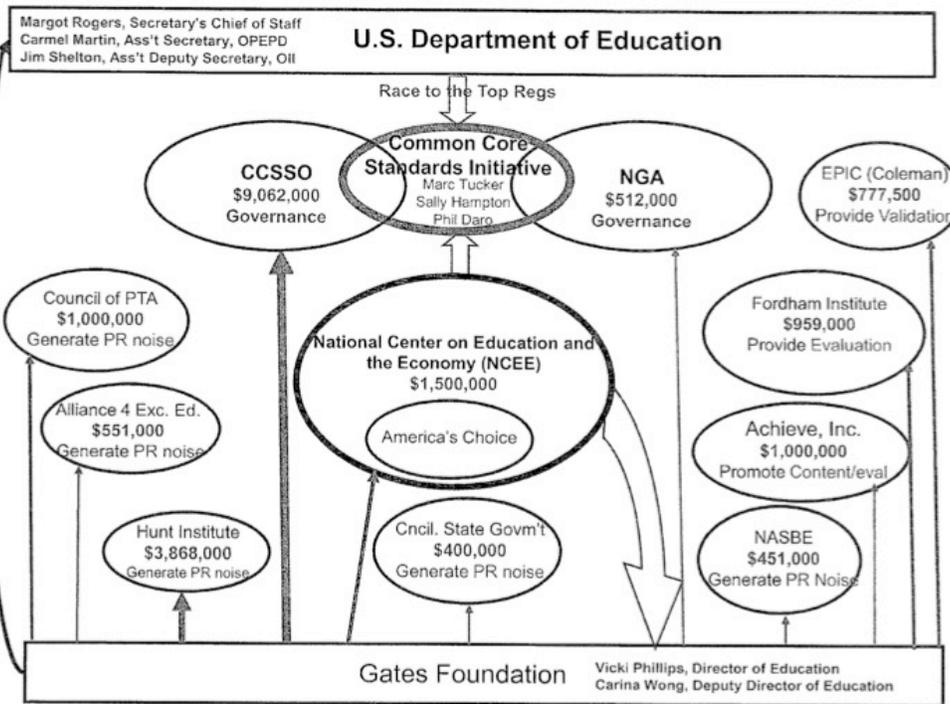
- National Governors Association (NGA)
- Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

These are DC-based trade associations and neither has a grant of authority from States to write national school standards. Nevertheless, this is the proponents' basis for claiming that the Initiative is 'state led.'

Because a federal attempt in the 1990's to take over the teaching of history in public schools had failed miserably, CCSI proponents adopted three strategies:

- Don't call it federal.
- Implement the project quickly and quietly.
- Start with less controversial subjects, i.e. English and mathematics.

The following chart was developed by and appears on the website of Truth in American Education, a national non-partisan group of American parents and citizens. They sum up their position well in the following statement: **The Common Core State Standards (CCSS), CCSS assessments, and state longitudinal data systems development along with associated privacy issues are being implemented nationwide with insufficient research-based evidence and insufficient public examination and discourse.**



Gates & NCEE influence in directing Common Core Standards:2009-10

Who is Marc Tucker?

Marc Tucker is an old pal and co-conspirator with Hillary Clinton, and their written "Let's Take Over American Education" exchange has long been archived in the *Congressional Record*, partially because of its conspiratorial nature.¹

Following is a portion of a post on the missourieducationwatchdog.com website which includes an excerpt from the Tucker to Clinton letter.

The "Dear Hillary" letter, written on Nov. 11, 1992 by Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE), lays out a plan "to remold the entire American system" into "a seamless web that literally extends from cradle to grave and is the same system for everyone," coordinated by "a system of labor market boards at the local, state and federal levels" where curriculum and "job matching" will be handled by counselors "accessing the integrated computer-based program."

Tucker's plan would change the mission of the schools from teaching children academic basics and knowledge to training them to serve the global economy in jobs selected by workforce boards. **Nothing in this comprehensive plan has anything to do with teaching schoolchildren how to read, write, or calculate. [emphasis added]**

Who is Sally Hampton?

Chair, ELA College and Career Readiness Standards Work Group; Member, ELA K-12 Common Core Standards Committee; Senior Fellow, America's Choice

Who is Phil Daro?

Chair, Mathematics College and Career Readiness Standards Work Group; Writing Team, Mathematics K-12 Common Core Standards Committee; Senior Fellow, America's Choice

Posted June 2012 by Oak Norton on utahsansagainstcommoncore.com.

I was at a Meet the Candidates event last night and someone told me that Phil Daro, one of the writers of the math standards, said **they wrote Common Core specifically for social justice [emphasis added]**. For those that don't know, social justice is a buzz word that means redistribution of wealth or helping the poor at the expense of the wealthy. I did a couple of web searches and found a [teacher's website](#) (who seems to get it) with this video where Phil says it right at the end.

Note: the teacher's article can be read at:

<http://arielsproject.wordpress.com/2011/05/10/common-core-state-standards-for-social-justice/>

Note: The video of Phil Daro can be seen at:

<http://www.utahsansagainstcommoncore.com/drafter-says-math-standards-were-for-social-justice/>

¹ whatiscommoncore.wordpress.com, a site belonging to three Utah moms who educate and lobby against CCSI
Central MS Tea Party

Race to the Top (RTTT)

The federal Stimulus Bill of 2009 contained an “executive earmark” of \$4.35 billion for the Department of Education. These funds underwrote a competition for federal educational grants. The Department required states, however, to “commit” to adopting the Common Core Standards (CCS) including the assessment standards, although those standards still had not been written and released. Commitment was required within two months (January 2010) after the RTTT funds application was released (November 2009). At that time, the country was in a deep recession and states desperately needed money. As a result:

No time was allowed for thorough review of CCS and deliberation before adoption.

Most **state legislatures were not in session** during the time period required.

The people and/or their elected representatives had **no opportunity for review or consent**.

An additional \$700 million in new RTTT earmark funds for the Department of Education was included in House Speaker John Boehner’s budget compromise with President Obama in 2011.

Another carrot! In addition to the promise of RTTT funds, states were promised a better chance at waivers from the No Child Left Behind requirements.

What Did the States Do?²

Forty-five states and the District of Columbia made a commitment. Not a single state legislature approved of it.

Only two governors refused to commit: Palin of Alaska and Perry of Texas.

Minnesota did not adopt the CSS Standard for mathematics.

Most states adopted the CCSI before the standards were even written or reviewed.

Another case of “We have to pass the bill to know what’s in the bill.” !!

As of March 3, 2013, thirteen states have taken action or are in serious discussions toward rejecting CCS. They are:

Alabama

Alabama is unique among Common Core states in developing its own tests for the standards rather than participating in one of two national testing groups. State education board member Charles Elliott said he expects other states will use Alabama’s independent tests as a model. Alabama also did not receive a Race to the Top federal grant, which required recipients to adopt Common Core after private organizations developed it.³

SB 90 prohibits the State Board of Education from adopting and the State Department of Education from implementing Common Core Standards. The governor has signed a school choice bill that has been the source of lots of controversy within the State house and without as the Alabama Educators Assn. filed a re-

² truthinamericaneducation.com; legislative websites of states cited

³ Voucher Controversy Embroils Alabama Common Core Bill article posted at news.heartland.org March 6, 2013

straining order. As a result of the political chaos, the bill to ditch Common Core was apparently tabled on March 13.

Colorado

Colorado opened discussions about revisiting their decision to adopt Common Core with two meetings in December 2012, hearing from 17 local educators and national critics. "It's a discussion that had never occurred but needed to occur," said state board chairman Bob Schaffer (R-Fort Collins), one of the three members who dissented in 2010. "I hope it raises some critical questions about Colorado's commitment to Common Core."⁴

Florida

HB 77 and SB524 delaying implementation and testing of Common Core

stateimpact.npr.org article dated March 20, 2013, reports the Florida State Board of Education asked for \$390.1 million to upgrade wireless internet access and another \$51.7 million for computers, tablets, and other devices. The Senate budget proposal set aside \$76 million for internet access.

Georgia

SB167 "A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Part 2 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A., relating to competencies and core curriculum, so as to declare certain actions void ab initio relating to adoption of certain curricula; to prohibit state education agencies from entering into any commitments relating to the federal Race to the Top program; to require hearings and public input prior to adoption of state-wide competencies and content standards; to limit the compilation and sharing of personal student and teacher data; to prohibit the expenditure of funds for a state-wide longitudinal data system except for administrative needs and federal grant compliance; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes."

Idaho

House Education Committee held hearings in January to examine advisability of implementing these standards.

"This will do to education in Idaho, what Obamacare is doing to health care in Idaho," believes Boise resident Stephanie Zimmerman concerning a national education program, the Common Core Standards Initiative. . . . Zimmerman, who is affiliated with the nonprofit Pioneer Institute in Massachusetts (a group that opposes the common core initiative), told members of the committee that her son is a freshman in high school and is already studying calculus. "Calculus isn't supposed to happen during the freshman year (under Common Core), but he's advanced," Zimmerman told the committee, and noted that in her view, her younger children will be held back from advancing beyond their grade level as the common core initiatives are more fully implemented.⁵

⁴ *Colorado Board of Education Hears Common Core Critics*, news.heartland.org, December 17, 2012

⁵ *Common Core Ed Standards Face Hearing in House Committee*, idahoreporter.com, January 7, 2013

Indiana

SB193 "Common core state educational standards. Provides that the state board of education (state board) may not continue to implement the common core standards or require the use of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers or Smarter Balanced assessment by schools until the state board holds at least one public meeting, ... There is a similar House bill in the House. SB193 passed 28-11.

news.heartland.org⁶ - March 21, 2013 - In five days, nearly a thousand Indianans and a coalition of 55 organizations signed a letter to Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, requesting that he support a bill to reconsider Common Core. . . . Hoosiers Against Common Core coordinated the letter, which they are releasing at a press conference this morning with representatives from the 55 supporting organizations and members of the House Education Committee. Signatories include a bevy of Tea Party groups, businesses, and family organizations.

Kansas

HB2289 prohibits the use of Common Core Standards. House Education Committee hearing scheduled March 20,

Michigan

HB4276 sponsored by Rep. Tom McMillan (R-Rochester Hills) prohibits implementation of Common Core Standards in the state. House Education Committee hearing on March 20 received the following comments as reported by the Detroit Free Press:

"I ask you to seriously consider the negative consequences," said William Schmidt, a professor at Michigan State University and a leading math education expert. The legislation, he told lawmakers, will "hinder and hurt our children's futures."

. . . Ze'ev Wurman, who was a U.S. Department of Education official under George W. Bush, said the standards aren't more rigorous and predicted students will leave high school less prepared. "You're going to end up with more remediation," Wurman said.

Teacher Lisa Keller of Port Huron testified in favor of the legislation, saying the common core standards were developed "sight unseen with no input from parents and teachers."

"The problem is we are experimenting on the children of Michigan," Keller said.

Missouri

HB616 prohibits the State Board of Education from adopting and implementing the standards for public schools developed by the Common Core Standards Initiative passed 3/14/13. SB 210 calls for same. Senate Education Committee hearing conducted on March 6.

Oklahoma

HB1907 creates a Common Core Task Force

⁶ a Heartland Institute site whose mission is to discover, develop, and promote free-market solutions to social and economic problems

South Carolina

S0604 prohibits the state department from implementing Common Core Standards effective upon signature by the governor. Gov. Haley announced support for the bill. Referred to Committee on 2/23.

South Dakota

HB1204 requires the Board of Education to obtain legislative approval before adopting any further Common Core standards, and to repeal a provision requiring the board to conduct certain public hearings. Passed in the House. Senate Committee hearing deferred to 41st legislative day.

Utah

August 4, 2102, The Salt Lake Tribune reports “the state school board decided to withdraw Friday from a consortium of states working to develop tests based on new Common Core academic standards, after months of pressure from some conservatives.”

Utah Senate passed SCR1 on March asking the Utah State Board of Education to reconsider the adoption of common core curriculum standards in English, mathematics and language arts. The House voted 50-23 in favor of [SB287](#), which establishes on record that the state reserves the right to withdraw from the common core standards.

National Education Standards

Common Core State Standards⁷

States may belong to one of two consortia for assessment purposes (Smarter Balanced Testing Consortium “Smarter Balanced” or Partnership for Assessment for Readiness of College & Career “PARCC”) and standards will be the same in each. The goal is to align ALL state standards in an effort to increase student achievement. **States must adopt 100% of the new standards and implement them word for word with no changes or deletions. They may only add 15% of new content to local standards.**

In 1994 Georgia scrapped a reading curriculum developed by the National Center on Education and the Economy because State Superintendent Kathy Cox “had some real trouble going forward with a document we weren’t going to be able to change.”⁸ Well, that’s exactly what states are getting with Common Core!

Although the developers claimed the standards are rigorous to make any student college-ready and are internationally benchmarked, the Validation Committee was never shown any evidence of this.⁹ The word “bench-marked” has since been substituted with “informed” on the Common Core website.

Math & English Language Arts Standards Are a Joke!

Dr. R. James Milgram, mathematics professor at Stanford University and a member of the NASA Advisory Council, was the only mathematician on the Validation Committee. He refused to sign off, stating “It’s almost a joke to think students in Common Core will be ready for math at a university.” Dr. Sandra Stotsky, 21st Century Chair in Teacher Quality at the University of Arkansas, served on the Common Core Validation Committee but refused to sign off on the LEA standards because of poor quality, empty skill sets, the de-emphasis on literature and low reading levels, such as 8th grade levels for 12th grade students.¹⁰ According to Dr. Stotsky, the reading level that will deem students “college ready” looks to be more like a 7th grade level.¹¹

Algebra I will be taught in the 9th grade rather than the 8th meaning it will be more difficult for most students to reach calculus in high school as expected by most universities.

PARCC

Tests designed by progressive reformers.

SMARTER BALANCED

Test influenced by Linda Darling-Hammond:

Radical Stanford Professor

Former Colleague of Bill Ayers

Opposes Standardized Testing of Students
(prefers methods such as ‘journaling’)

Dr. Stotsky and Dr. Milgram not only refused to sign off on the standards, but have gone on to testify with a warning voice to state legislatures and school boards about the inadequacy of the standards.

⁷ Missouri Watchdog, 2011

⁸ *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, March 11, 2004

⁹ stopcommoncore.com

¹⁰ educationnewyork.com

¹¹ stopthecommoncore.com
Central MS Tea Party

Geometry will be taught by a experimental method never used successfully anywhere in the world. And if the experiment doesn't work, the teacher has no appeal to get it changed!

Classical literature is de-emphasized in favor of reading non-fictional texts such as brochures and technical manuals. One educational publisher even includes teaching restaurant menus rather than literature. Most English teachers have not been trained to teach this kind of material and the good ones would surely not want to!

Historic works like *The Gettysburg Address* are taught only in sentences with no context.

Will Fitzhugh, founder of The Concord Review, opens his essay entitled *Skip the Knowledge* with this:

Poor James Madison, back in the day, spending endless hours reading scores upon scores of books on the history of governments, as he prepared to become the resident historian and intellectual "father" of the United States Constitution in the summer of 1787 in Philadelphia! If he had only known what we know now thanks to the new Common Core, he could have saved the great bulk of that time and effort if he had only acquired some Thinking Skills instead!

Students' new Common academic work with texts about which they will be asked to Think & Learn Deeply, may encourage them to believe that ignorance is no barrier to useful thinking, in the same way that those who have written the Common Core Standards believe that they can think deeply about and make policy for our many state education systems, without having spent much, if any time, as teachers themselves, or even in meeting with teachers who have the experience they lack."¹²

"In 5th grade, your child will read widely and deeply from a range of high-quality, increasingly challenging fiction and nonfiction from **diverse cultures** [emphasis added] and time periods. . . . Identifying and judging evidence that supports particular ideas in an author's argument **to change a reader's point of view** [emphasis added]."¹³ One might think that most parents, while not objecting to their children learning of other cultures, would much prefer to influence themselves the content and context of what they learn!

The Fordham Institute conducted a study on Georgia's educational standards and determined that they were as good as or better than the standards imposed by Common Core. Begs the question - why expend so much energy and money to push an initiative that is no better than what schools currently follow?

How does designing a "cookie cutter" for what each student must achieve foster excellence? CCSS cannot be changed by states. Shouldn't educators have a real problem with that?

June 2010 - CCS Standards are released.

August 2010 - Final state commitments required

Note that, again, there was no time for review and state legislatures were not in session.

¹² *Turnabout*, an article by Will Fitzhugh of The Concord Review published August 2012

¹³ *Parents Guide to Students Success*, pta.org
Central MS Tea Party

Who is David Coleman?

“Coleman was a lead architect of the Common Core standards, which emphasize canonical literature—think Shakespeare, Toni Morrison, Pablo Neruda—and serious nonfiction texts across all subjects, from math (Euclid’s Elements), to science (medical articles by *The New Yorker’s* Atul Gawande), to social studies (the Declaration of Sentiments from the feminist Seneca Falls Convention of 1848). He has spent the past year traveling from state to state, showing English teachers how to lead a close reading of great literature. . . .

. . . Alan Lawrence Sitomer, State Teacher of the Year for California in 2007, aired a common complaint on his blog: Coleman “has zero K–12 teaching experience. Should we really be learning how to cook from a person who’s never been in the kitchen?” But what has proved most controversial is Coleman’s unilateral vision for American students, of college as the goal and a college-prep curriculum as the means.”¹⁴

“ . . . Mark Bauerlein, an English professor at Emory University who helped the team developing the Common Core standards. . . eventually parted ways with Coleman, however, mainly because he disagrees with attempts to standardize learning.”¹⁵

Common Core State Standards

Common Assessments

Common Curriculum

Longitudinal Data Systems

Nationalized Education in the USA

The National Data Base

Another requirement for states seeking the Obama Administration’s RTTT dollars is that states build huge student data bases. These would contain over 400 points of data on each student such as those in the categories listed below. The federal department of education is now pressuring states to turn over this data to the government. In addition, the two consortia are contractually obligated to give the government student-level data resulting from the tests.

The next generation will be conditioned to accept that government has the right to dictate the economic and educational priorities of a nation.

Longitudinal Data Systems¹⁶

Adoption of these standards is the means by which the federal government introduces their data-gathering effort. CCS participating states will be connected to a Longitudinal Data System “LDS”. Information is disseminated via LDS (a federal requirement) connecting states and providing a data warehouse for federal agencies.

What kind of data will be in the warehouse?

Health Factors - dental, birthmarks, immunization, health insurance coverage, psychiatric problems, etc.

Education Factors - IQ, Test results, grades, non-school activity information, community service hours, etc.

¹⁴ atlantic.com, *The Schoolmaster* by Dana Goldstein, October 2012

¹⁵ npr.org, *New Reading Standards Aim to Prep Kids for College - But at What Cost?* by NPR Staff, January 19, 2013

¹⁶ Missouri Watchdog, 2011; Illinois Data System
Central MS Tea Party

Family Factors - Parent occupation, education and income level, number of persons owning businesses, etc.

Philosophical & Family Factors - Dwelling arrangements & ownership, attitudes toward debt acquisition, media used in household, religious affiliations, etc.

Financial Factors - Number of credit cards & average total balance, family income range & sources, method to finance college, etc.

Student Labor & Personal Factors - Work hours & schedule, income, work responsibility, attendance & study, employment permit description & number, voting status

National Curriculum

Core Standards has now moved toward developing a common or national curriculum. The developers of the testing models told the federal government when they applied for funding grants that they intended to develop curricula models. This raises serious issues, beginning with the disappearance of local control by boards and by parents. Further, there is:

No constitutional or statutory provision for national educational standards, national assessments or national curricula

No evidence that national curriculum leads to higher achievement nor are there any standards for such curricula

No evidence to recommend a design or justification for a single curriculum for all.

It is a fallacy that states will control curriculum.
The point of standards is to drive curriculum.

Gates, in partnership with the Pearson Foundation (world's largest publishing company) announced it will fund a \$20 project to develop learning resources aligned to the Common Core State Standards. This announcement included the stated intent "to fundamentally change the way students and teachers interact in the classroom, and ultimately, how education works in America."¹⁷

What Will it Cost the States?

Beyond the legal issues, the cost of implementing the standards should be of great concern to states, Theodor Rebarber, CEO and founder of AccountabilityWorks, explained. "States did almost no costs analysis" when they signed on to adopt the Common Core standards, Rebarber noted. However, a report he authored earlier[2012] this year [conservatively estimated](#) the overall national cost for implementing Common Core at a hefty \$16 billion.¹⁸

States can expect to incur costs in the following areas due to Common Core:

- Professional development
- Textbooks & instructional materials
- Assessments (Some test results cannot be scored by computer, but must be scored by hand. Scorers will want to be paid.)

¹⁷ gatesfoundation.org/pressreleases; New York Times, 4/28/2011

¹⁸ Why States Should Hop Off the National Standards Bandwagon, a blog.heritage.org by Rachel Sheffield
Central MS Tea Party [The Case for Opting Out of Common Core](#)

- Computer Equipment
- Network Maintenance & Upgrade

Mississippi is in the PARCC consortia. The Pioneer Institute’s research paper on CC costs estimates a \$65 million cost for professional development alone.

Professional Development

Since Common Core completely changes the reading emphasis in its English & Language Arts standards, it is reasonable to assume that all teachers will be retrained to prepare for this.

Textbooks & Instructional Materials

Up-front costs for textbooks and instructional materials for states to realign to the math and English standards are estimated at \$2.47 billion. **Mississippi’s up-front materials cost is estimated to be between \$25 and \$27 million.**¹⁹

Testing Costs/Technology

The Federal Department of Education provided \$360 million in funding to the consortia to develop and launch the assessment aspect of Common Core. These computer-based tests will be administered several times each year to all students in all grades beginning in 2014. School districts will be required to maintain this technology going forward.

There are one time costs, year one operational costs, and on-going operational costs for years 2 through 7. A study conducted by The Pioneer Institute projects that the annual cost for assessments for states participating in the consortia will increase by a total of \$177.2 million each year. **They estimate Mississippi’s multi-year technology costs at around \$75 million.**

The State of Georgia has typically paid \$5 per student for assessment scoring. The Georgia Superintendent’s office has admitted that the Common Core Assessments will likely quadruple that cost to \$22 per student. A more objective estimate is that it may reach \$100 per student.²⁰

Conclusions

The Pioneer Institute concluded its study of Common Core costs by saying that implementation is likely to represent substantial additional expense for most states. States signed off on it without a thorough vetting of costs and benefits and paid very little attention to the potential technology infrastructure costs they may face. At the time of the paper’s release (February 2012), only a handful of states had begun to analyze costs.

Common Core promises to be a *huge* unfunded mandate!

The taxpayers of the states pay for the education of their children in public schools. State elected officials have no right to hand over the governance of their education to either the federal government or unaccountable boards of non-profit organizations.

“Here’s the thing I don’t get, and here is why I really think why this should bug you. You don’t need a whole bunch of educational data in a big database to teach a child how to set goals. The government doesn’t need to retain all that data in a gigantic database to help a child set goals and fulfill those goals. So, not only are our kids going to feel like

¹⁹ The Pioneer Institute’s public policy research online at accountabilityworks.org

²⁰ stopcommoncore.com, a grassroots citizen movement in Georgia
Central MS Tea Party

animals in a cage with this new one size fits all curriculum, they are going to be finely measured lab rats for companies like eScholar. Gee... I can't wait to sign my kid up for this!"²¹

Known vs. Unknown

Inside the Mind of School Administrators: Insights from ASCD 2013 posted at edsurge.com article dated March 19, 2013

"Close to 11,000 administrators attended [ASCD's Annual Conference in Chicago](#) this March. If you want to discover what matters to administrators, this is the conference to attend. The major session trends weren't unexpected: [Common Core State Standards](#), [PARCC](#) and [Smarter Balanced](#) assessments, new teacher and principal evaluations, improving mathematics and reading skills, and integrating technology. . . .

. . . The anxiety in the rooms at the PARCC and Smarter Balanced update sessions was palpable. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have been around since 2010, so schools have begun unpacking the implications for their curriculum. However, the assessments are often the tail that wags the dog. Without clear indicators and sample assessment items, schools have felt like they're steering toward a moving target. The few sample assessments items shared during the PARCC and Smarter Balanced sessions were treated like gold by attendees--this is what they've been waiting for. . . .

. . . Perhaps more revealing however are the conversations outside of the sessions. Administrators value the opinions of their fellow peers exponentially more than those from publishers, service providers, or even researchers. Frequently they joked about how everything is CCSS-aligned, despite no one really fully understanding what that means yet "

National standards in science and history/social studies are in development. Also, some influential health and sex education groups have released national standards in those areas. They are not included in CC yet, but the structure is in place and districts are being acclimated to accepting new dictates from Common Core and their federal master through the power of federal dollars.

This is a grandiose plan for a managed, global economy. Common Core is specifically suited toward developing human capital for the global labor market. This new vision for a global economy that socialists have long sought has nothing to do with the individual freedoms that our founding fathers gave us.

²¹ conservativeteachersofamerica.com teacher post
Central MS Tea Party

Where is the Constitution?

The goal of Common Core is to control all education - kindergarten through college - and that includes private and home-schools. David Coleman, the primary author of the CC English Language Arts standards and president of the College Board has promised to align the SAT with Common Core and its unique method of instruction. That would place private schools and home schoolers at a tremendous disadvantage unless their schools/parents give in to accept Common Core. Colleges place a strong emphasis on the SAT for admittance.²²

Both political parties have over many years attempted to dictate federal control over school curricula despite clear direction from Congress that such is prohibited. By foisting Common Core on states, the Obama Administration is violating at least three statutes.

- General Education Provisions Act
- Department of Education Organization Act
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

“Federal involvement in curriculum, as attorney Kent Talbert of Talbert & Eitel explained, raises critical legal questions. As he points out in [a February report](#), three federal laws prohibit “federal direction, control, or supervision of curricula, programs of instruction, and instructional materials...in the elementary and secondary school arena.” The Obama Administration’s actions to condition federal Race to the Top funding on a state’s adoption of Common Core standards, as well as the Administration’s recent move to condition No Child Left Behind waivers on a state’s adoption of the standards, runs afoul of these laws.”²³

The Family Education Rights & Privacy Act

The purposes of this federal statute are twofold:

1. to ensure that parents have access to their children's educational records and
2. to protect the privacy rights of parents and children by limiting access to these records without parental consent.

FERPA deals with:

- access to educational records
- parental right to inspect and review records
- amendment of records
- destruction of records

FERPA applies to all agencies and institutions that receive federal funds, including elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities. The statute is in the United States Code at 20 U. S. C. 1232g and 1232h. The regulations are in the Code of Federal Regulations at 34 C.F.R Part 99.

Common Core has gutted this law by not only requiring the collection of private data, but allowing the sharing of the data with other government entities so long as it has an educational context/ purpose for the sharing.

The Department of Education is prohibited from collecting the data, so it is getting around this by requiring the states to gather the data, then share it with the federal government.

²² Stop the Common Core, a youtube video posted by stopthecommoncore.com, a Georgia grassroots movement

²³ Why States Should Hope Off the National Standards Bandwagon, a blog.heritage.org by Rachel Sheffield
Central MS Tea Party The Case for Opting Out of Common Core

Education Without Representation

Parents or teachers who have a problem with some aspect(s) of the CC standards or curriculum have no recourse. **There is nothing the school board, superintendent, state superintendent, or legislature can do to change them.** The standards are owned by the NGO and the CCSO.

Where is representative government in this equation? In Georgia, for instance, the State received a one-time \$400 million RTTT grant. Yet, taxpayers fund their schools to the tune of \$13 billion each year. And they have no voice in the standards set for education or in the curriculum and testing?!

Follow the Money

Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste

Jeff Bryant, a marketing and communications consultant for non-profits with over 30 years' experience analyzed the business potential in specific markets for what is surely to become an educational crisis over Common Core Assessments. The entirety of his article is posted online.²⁴ but here are the salient points.

Education historian Diane Ravitch has observed that a persistent narrative in the media is that American schools are "in crisis."

1. **The State of Kentucky got bad news** just before the November election that the percent of students scoring "proficient or better in reading and math had dropped about 1/3. The tests were brand new and aligned to the new standards promoted by Common Core."
2. "Now imagine the scenario when what happened in Kentucky begins rolling out across the country — as state after state implements the bright, shiny new tests and watches in horror as scores drop off "The Proficiency Cliff." How tempting it will be for major media outlets across the country to cast this as a "crisis" in education? In fact, some people are betting good money on that happening," says Bryant.
3. In the summer 2012 about 100 private equity investors gathered in NYC at the University Club where they heard about "ripening profit potentials in the public education arena — a \$500+ billion market – due to the roll-out of new assessments aligned to the Common Core." According to the reporter for the Huffington Post who was present, Rob Lytle of The Parthenon Group, a business strategy advisor, said that if the Common Core tests are "as rigorous as advertised, **a huge number of schools will suddenly look really bad**, [emphasis added] their students testing way behind in reading and math. They'll want help, quick. And private, for-profit vendors selling lesson plans, educational software and student assessments will be right there to provide it."
4. **This is a business opportunity because** the tests will reveal performance gaps in student achievement and school officials will begin seeking product and services to help bring up scores. Lytle identified Kentucky as a "low need" state where the gap is concerned - that's before the scores came in!
So with a low-need state like Kentucky experiencing a 30 percent drop in test scores, does that mean states with high-need will experience even steeper drops? **Crisis material for sure!**
5. The testing business is a \$2.3 billion, but the real money is in the preparation business.

²⁴ America's Next Education' Crisis' - and who benefits, washingtonpost.com, December 7. 2012

6. The Gates Foundation and the Pearson Foundation (a non-profit owned by the for-profit Pearson Company) are working together to create on-line curricula for the new CC standards for math and English language arts for elementary - high school. Pearson is a leading educational publishing company under several imprints such as Scott-Foresman and Prentice-Hall. They have also acquired America's Choice, where the aforementioned Phil Daro and Sally Hampton - drafters of Common Core Standards - are affiliated.

According to Joanne Weiss, chief of staff to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and the RTTT program leader, "The development of common standards and shared assessments radically alters the market for innovation in curriculum development, professional development, and formative assessments. Previously, these markets operated on a state-by-state basis, and often on a district-by-district basis. But the adoption of common standards and shared assessments means that education entrepreneurs will enjoy national markets where the best products can be taken to scale."²⁵

Common Core in Mississippi

Mississippi Legislature has been working hard on the Governor's Education Works bill which includes provision for Charter Schools. Common Core has the potential of obliterating any benefits of school choice. If it is imposed on public charter schools and schools with voucher programs, there will be no point in having a choice.

Senate Bill 2056 would have implemented Common Core standards. Fortunately, it died in Committee in the House. The Home School Legal Defense Association opposed this bill on behalf of students and their families

The Mississippi Board of Education adopted Common Core Standards for mathematics and English language arts & literacy in June 2010. Common Core testing begins in 2014. [Mississippi needs to act now to opt out of Common Core!](#)

sunherald.com - January 29, 2013 - The Mississippi Sun-Herald reports that like many other school districts, Pascagoula district leaders are "bracing themselves as they prepare for new federal requirements for online state testing".

It is interesting to note that most states adopted Common Core without doing a cost analysis of the program.

The Mississippi Sun-Herald explains that "All U.S. students in second through 12th grades, under the newly adopted Common Core State Standards, will take the same standardized tests online rather than on paper at school. The deadline for schools to implement this requirement is the 2014-15 school year."

The Sun-Herald quotes Pascagoula District Superintendent Wayne Rodolfich: "This is going to be a problem in Mississippi if it's not addressed now in the budget."

The article states that many school districts "find themselves struggling with a lack in technology and hardware, outdated electrical infrastructure, a shortage of bandwidth and a need for more staff" to manage all the requirements of Common Core implementation.

²⁵ *Innovations in Education* by Joanne Weiss, a Harvard Business Review blog posted March 31, 2011

The Public Policy Debate

The Pioneer Institute

Jim Stergios of the Pioneer Institute warned that the standards create “a disincentive to innovators long term.” He explained that while the Common Core standards aim to have students take Algebra I in ninth grade, Massachusetts previously set a higher standard to have students take Algebra I in eighth grade. **“So it’s really become for us a ‘race to the middle.’”**

Heritage Foundation

Comments to Heritage in April 2012: When “states signed on to common core standards, they did not realize...that they were transferring control of the school curriculum to the federal government,” said Sandra Stotsky, 21st Century Chair in Teacher Quality at the University of Arkansas’s Department of Education Reform,..”

Local control - even state of control - of the education of our children is a thing of the past unless states, administrators, and parents revolt!

Diane Ravitch, Research Professor of Education at New York University, blogger on education issues, blog posted February 21, 2013

“After much deliberation, I have come to the conclusion that I can’t wait five or ten years to find out whether test scores go up or down, whether or not schools improve, and whether the kids now far behind are worse off than they are today.

I have come to the conclusion that the Common Core standards effort is fundamentally flawed by the process with which they have been foisted upon the nation.

The Common Core standards have been adopted in 46 states and the District of Columbia without any field test. They are being imposed on the children of this nation despite the fact that no one has any idea how they will affect students, teachers, or schools. We are a nation of guinea pigs, almost all trying an unknown new program at the same time.”

Sadly, there has been no detectable public policy debate related to Common Core in Mississippi. Why? It’s time to get one started and look more critically at a program that stands to cost Mississippians in excess of \$1.67 billion dollars over the next 2-4 years. After which, as credible critical thinkers have projected, our children will be worse off educationally and in many other ways.

Resources

<http://truthinamericaneducation.com/> <http://www.cato.org/blog/other-federal-takeover>

<http://blog.heritage.org/2012/04/23/why-states-should-hop-off-the-national-standards-bandwagon/>

<http://whatiscommoncore.wordpress.com/2012/09/11/what-experts-realize-about-common-core-in-2012/>

<http://conservativeteachersofamerica.com/>

COMMON CORE: MYTHS VS. FACTS²⁶

MYTH

Common Core (CC) was a state led initiative.

FACT

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

MYTH

The federal government is not involved in the CC scheme.

FACT

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

MYTH

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

FACT

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

MYTH

Under CC, the states will still control their standards.

FACT

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

MYTH

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

²⁶ truthinamericaneducation.org; American Principles Project
Central MS Tea Party

FACT

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

MYTH

The CC standards are rigorous and will make our children “college - ready.”

FACT

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

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

MYTH

The CC standards are “internationally benchmarked.”

FACT

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

MYTH

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

FACT

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

MYTH

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

FACT

The percentage of students who fit that description is vanishingly small (much less than 2%); most families move, if at all, within states, not to other states. It is nonsensical to bind our entire education system in a straightjacket to benefit such a small number of students.