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HUFF  
POST

POLITICS

## Common Core: A Lesson Plan for Raising up Compliant, Non-thinking Citizens

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As I point out in my new book, *A Government of Wolves: The Emerging American Police State*, there are several methods for controlling a population. You can intimidate the citizenry into obedience through force, relying on military strength and weaponry such as SWAT team raids, militarized police, and a vast array of lethal and nonlethal weapons. You can manipulate them into marching in lockstep with your dictates through the use of propaganda and carefully timed fear tactics about threats to their safety, whether through the phantom menace of terrorist attacks or shooting sprees by solitary gunmen. Or you can indoctrinate them into compliance from an early age through the schools, discouraging them from thinking for themselves while rewarding them for regurgitating whatever the government, through its so-called educational standards, dictates they should be taught.

Those who founded America believed that an educated citizenry knowledgeable about their rights was the surest means of preserving freedom. If so, then the inverse should also hold true: that the surest way for a government to maintain its power and keep the citizenry in line is by rendering them ignorant of their rights and unable to think for themselves.

When viewed in light of the government's ongoing attempts to amass power at great cost to Americans -- in terms of free speech rights, privacy, due process, etc. -- the debate over Common Core State Standards, which would transform and nationalize school curriculum from kindergarten through 12th grade, becomes that much more critical.

Essentially, these standards, which were developed through a partnership between big government and corporations, in the absence of any real input from parents or educators with practical, hands-on classroom experience, and are being rolled out in 45 states and the District of Columbia, will create a generation of test-takers capable of little else, molded and shaped by the federal government and its corporate allies into what it considers to be ideal citizens.

Moreover, as Valerie Strauss reports for *The Washington Post*:

"The costs of the tests, which have multiple pieces throughout the year plus the computer platforms needed to administer and score them, will be enormous and will come at the expense of more important things. The plunging scores will be used as an excuse to close more public schools and open more privatized charters and voucher schools, especially in poor communities of color. If, as proposed, the Common Core's 'college and career ready' performance level becomes the standard for high school graduation, it will push more kids out of high school than it will prepare for college."

With so much money to be made and so many questionable agendas at work, it is little wonder, then, that attempts are being made to squelch any and all opposition to these standards. For example, at a recent public forum to discuss the implementation of these standards in Baltimore County public schools, one parent, 46-year-old Robert Small, found himself "pulled out of the meeting, arrested and charged with second-degree assault of a police officer" simply for daring to voice his discontent with the standards during a Q&A session with the superintendent.

"Don't stand for this. You are sitting here like cattle," shouted Robert Small to his fellow attendees as he was being dragged out of the "forum" on the Common Core standards. "Is this America?"

No, Mr. Small, this is no longer America. This is, instead, fascism with a smile, sold to us by our so-called representatives, calculating corporations, and an educational system that is marching in lockstep with the government's agenda.

In this way, we are being conditioned to be slaves without knowing it. That way, we are easier to control. "A really efficient totalitarian state would be one in which the all-powerful executive of political bosses and their army of managers control a population of slaves who do not have to be coerced, because they love their servitude," writes Aldous Huxley.

The original purpose of a pre-university education in early America was not to prepare young people to be doctors or lawyers but, as Thomas Jefferson believed, to make citizens knowledgeable about "their rights, interests, and duties as men and citizens."

Yet that's where the problem arises for us today. Most citizens have little, if any, knowledge about their basic rights, largely due to an educational system that does a poor job of teaching the basic freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Many studies confirm this. For instance, when *Newsweek* asked 1,000 adult U.S. citizens to take America's official citizenship test, 29 percent of respondents couldn't name the current vice president of the United States. Seventy-three percent couldn't correctly

say why America fought the Cold War. More critically, 44 percent were unable to define the Bill of Rights.

That Americans are constitutionally illiterate is not a mere oversight on the part of government educators. And things will only get worse under Common Core, which as the *The Washington Post* reports, is a not-so-subtle attempt "to circumvent federal restrictions on the adoption of a national curriculum."

As with most "bright ideas" coming out of the federal government, once you follow the money trail, it all makes sense. And those who stand to profit are the companies creating both the tests that will drive the school curriculum, as well as the preparatory test materials, the computer and software industries, and the states, which will receive federal funds in exchange for their cooperation.

Putting aside the profit-driven motives of the corporations and the power-driven motives of the government, there is also an inherent arrogance in the implementation of these Common Core standards that speaks to the government's view that parents essentially forfeit their rights when they send their children to a public school, and should have little to no say in what their kids are taught and how they are treated by school officials. This is evident in the transformation of the schools into quasi-prisons, complete with metal detectors, drug-sniffing dogs, and surveillance cameras. The result is a generation of young people browbeaten into believing that they have no true rights, while government authorities have total power and can violate constitutional rights whenever they see fit.

Yet as Richard Dreyfuss, Oscar-winning actor and civics education activist, warns: "Unless we teach the ideas that make America a miracle of government, it will go away in your kids' lifetimes, and we will be a fable."

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OCTOBER 28, 2013

# Common Core Teaches Second Graders to be Good Union Comrades

**Michael Schaus**

10/28/2013 12:01:00 AM

Aside from the obvious objections to allowing the creators of Healthcare.gov get *more* involved in the education of America's youth, a new reason to resist the creepily altruistic "Common Core" curriculum has surfaced. New Common Core teaching materials instruct second graders that land owners are intrinsically evil, that business owners are inherently greedy, and Saul Alinsky radicals are the saviors of the everyman. (Besides – and I know this should seem pretty obvious – do you really want the architects of a 17 trillion dollar debt teaching our kids things like basic math?)

According to [Fox news](#), a textbook company contracted to produce materials under Common Core State Standards is trying to teach students as young as second grade about economic fairness by praising unions, protests and labor leader Cesar Chavez, according to an education watchdog group.

Cesar Chavez is one of the liberal movement's most recent heroes to be considered "in vogue"; as was evidenced by Google's decision to honor the Labor activist instead of Jesus last Easter Sunday. Chavez's Saul-Alinsky-inspired-radicalism should put him firmly on the fringe of mainstream Americanism. ([A great read on Chavez can be found here.](#)) But, believe it or not, the textbook's mention of Chavez is only a minor portion of the indoctrination "lesson" plan.

In addition to reading a glowing biography of the Marxist labor leader, students will be asked to evaluate the "scales of fairness" between wealthy landowners, and lowly [non-union] workers.

*"Fairness and equality exist when the scales are balanced," teachers are prompted to instruct the students. They are then supposed to ask the students whether both sides, as presented in the plan, are equal, providing a correct answer of "no" in the teachers' guide.*

See? According to Common Core standards, the fact that wealthy business owners have more than the people they hire, is "unfair." (Although, in all fairness, second grade might be the right age group for liberals to share their ideas. This could be an honest attempt to keep the left engaged with a demographic that has an equal grasp of market forces and economic theory.)

Although I have not flipped through the comprehensive list of teaching materials tied to this disturbingly Leninist interpretation of economic "fairness", I can make a safe assumption that the impressionable second grade economists will **not** be taught about the prosperity generated by business owner's wealth; or the natural fairness of private ownership and free market.

After all, it's kinda tough to get a job from a poor farm worker who rents his property.

Economic theories, wealth creation, John Smith's concept of private property, market forces, and Chavez's radicalism aside. . . There is still a pretty big question regarding *why* second graders would need to wrap their young brains around the concept of labor unions and so called "scales of fairness." Quite frankly, putting any organized bureaucratic government agency in charge of disseminating such information to young children is chilling. And given the government's tendency to view wealth creators merely as untapped tax-revenue sources, it's unlikely that such lesson plans would be presented without anti-capitalistic bias.

Once again the common core standards illustrate a decidedly creepy intrusion of politics into education from the highest levels. While education has been largely consumed by leftist philosophies for some time, the danger of Common Core is that this absorption of political activism in the classroom will now be pushed from the *Federal* level. . . A painfully intense infringement on local control will await any districts that decide to adopt the Fed's centrally planned concept of "education".

While Karl Marx is not yet required reading under the Common Core curriculum, this latest example of the Fed's ideological intrusion into education should set off some alarm bells. Aside from the laughable notion that a *greater* Federal influence in local schools will benefit the system, it makes the perversions of our kids' worldview that much easier.

And this, comrades, concludes today's lesson on Common Core radicalism.

# Eagle Forum




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## Checking Your Kids' School Assignments

by Phyllis Schlafly

October 23, 2013

Have you checked your kids' school assignments lately? You might be shocked if you do.

Sixth-grade children in a history class in the Bryant School District in Arkansas (whose website brags that the district "has embraced" Common Core standards) were assigned a project to update the U.S. Bill of Rights because it is "outdated." They were instructed to "prioritize, revise, omit two and add two amendments."

The written assignment is full of lies, such as that "the government of the United States is currently revisiting The Bill of Rights," that "They (presumably the government) have determined that it is outdated and may not remain in its current form any longer," and that our Constitution can be changed by a "National Revised Bill of Rights Task Force (NRBR)" (to which students could be appointed).

St. Joseph-Ogden High School, a public school in St. Joseph, Illinois, gave its sophomore class an assignment to choose which of ten people were "worthy" of getting kidney dialysis when the hospital had only six machines. The assignment instructed the students, "four people are not going to live. You must decide from the information below which six will survive."

The students were given the list of the ten who desperately needed kidney dialysis with identification about their occupation, age and ethnicity, and told to give each a score. The instructions stated: "Put the people in order using 1-10, 1 being the person you want to save first and 10 being the person you would save last," with the assumption that those getting scores 7 through 10 would be marked for death.

Since when are high school students allowed to judge who may live and who must die? Is this to prepare us to accept Death Panels from Obamacare?

Unfortunately, such public school class assignments are not new. A Department of Education hearing in Seattle on March 13, 1984 heard a parent describe the Health class in Clackamas High School in Oregon.

Students were presented with the "lifeboat situation": too many people are in the sinking lifeboat and the students were

ordered to choose whose lives are not worth saving and should be thrown overboard so the lifeboat won't sink. Variations of the lifeboat situation have been widely used in public schools for many years.

A drama teacher at Cactus Shadows High School in Cave Creek, Arizona, had his students perform a play in which one of the characters falls in love with a goat. The play includes sexually explicit content and vulgar sexual terms.

At Lucy Elementary School near Memphis, Tennessee, an assignment required each student to pick an idol and write an essay about him. A ten-year-old girl chose God as her idol, but the teacher found this unacceptable and demanded that the girl write about someone else.

The girl then wrote about Michael Jackson, which the teacher accepted. After the girl's mother spoke out against this in the local media, the school apologized and gave the girl credit for her original work.

Fourth graders in Gilbert, Arizona, and third graders in Louisiana and were given a lesson on adultery that included specific questions designed to make the child curious about what adultery is and how it affects relationships. The teacher said it came from approved Common Core materials for third-graders.

Glenn Beck reported that Poolesville High School in Montgomery County, Maryland, which is Common Core compliant, administered an intrusive survey to students that included personal questions about family, religion, income, political identification, illegal drugs, Obamacare, guns, and same-sex marriage. Click on [The Blaze](#) to be entertained by the conflicting responses that school officials gave to parents who complained and to reporters.

The question that parents found particularly obnoxious and trouble-making was, "If President Obama were caucasian how much more or less criticism do you think he would receive?" The multiple-choice answers were: "A lot less, Somewhat less, No difference, Somewhat more, A lot more."

Fifth-graders in North Bellmore, New York, spent several weeks studying the United Nations. One mother was highly offended when her daughter received full credit for writing that our human rights come from government (instead of from God, as our Declaration of Independence proclaims).

At Alliance High School in Nebraska, the principal announced on October 7 that, because of the government shutdown, he was shutting down the usual morning recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. After public protest, he reversed his ban.

None of the above assignments quoted directly from a Common Core curriculum, but some claim to be "aligned with Common Core" or "Common Core compliant." It's beginning to look like such assertions are a cover to fill the minds of public school students with all kinds of inappropriate leftwing notions, while erecting a Common Core "wall" to prevent parental oversight.

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OCTOBER 30, 2013

# Third-Graders Learn to Protest Against Their School SEIU-Style – Courtesy of Common Core-Aligned Lesson

**Kyle Olson**

10/11/2013 12:01:00 AM - Kyle Olson

Every day our staff at [EAGnews](#) wrestles with the following questions: “What are our children being taught in school?” and “How is the information they’re learning going to change America?”

Those are important questions to ask, particularly since government schools in more than 40 states will soon be teaching students a curriculum that’s aligned to the new Common Core national standards.

There are still a lot of unanswered questions about Common Core. One of the biggest is, “What kind of ideas are leftists going to try and slip into your child’s classroom through the Common Core experiment?”

There’s no doubt it will happen. There is far too much documented evidence of liberal educators actively designing lesson plans and strategies to indoctrinate students into their school of thought.

And they don’t just target college students and high school kids. Many of their strategies call for the indoctrination process to begin in the early elementary grades.

## [WATCH THIS VIDEO.](#)

One might argue that there’s a firewall against such political mischief, since it’s up to local school districts to decide how they’re going to teach the new math and English standards to students.

But most school districts in Common Core-aligned states won’t be designing their own unique curriculum. That would require a lot of time, money and brainpower.

Instead most districts have purchased – or will purchase – a pre-written, Common Core-ready curriculum from a major textbook company, like the Zaner-Bloser company.

EAGnews recently purchased a stack of Common Core-aligned teacher guides produced by Zaner-

Bloser because we wanted to know what students are being taught about America's history, economic system and predominant culture.

The guides we purchased are for grades 1-6 and feature different texts promoted by the Common Core learning standards. Each text comes with a week's worth of related lessons.

### **Handling 'problems,' SEIU-style**

One of the books recommended in the third-grade teaching guide is "Si Se Puede/Yes We Can!"

Zaner-Bloser includes this book – with its very familiar title – in its "Rights and Responsibilities" unit.

Most Americans would probably expect a unit about citizen "rights and responsibilities" to be firmly rooted in the Constitutional principle of individual rights – as described by the Bill of Rights – and checks on the power of government.

But that's not the goal of the "Si Se Puede" book and lesson plans.

According to the Zaner-Bloser guide, the "central question" for students to grapple with is, "How can we work together as a community to stand up for our rights?"

You can already see where this is going.

"Si Se Puede" tells the story of a 1985 SEIU-led janitors strike in Los Angeles.

The acronym SEIU refers to the Service Employees International Union, one of the largest and most radical far-left labor unions in the country.

So that's the kind of "community" Zaner-Bloser authors are referring to.

In the teachers' guide, the authors say the janitors went on strike "for more money because their wages [were] too low to be fair."

Keep in mind, this unit is geared for 8- and 9-year-olds who have no understanding of how the labor market works, let alone any knowledge of the economic principle of supply and demand.

And yet they're being told that the janitors weren't making a "fair" wage.

That's not all they're being taught. In the guide, teachers are told to introduce students to the vocabulary word of the week – "protest."

The book instructs the teacher to "remind students that a protest is an event in which people publicly show their strong disapproval of something. Discuss protest throughout the week. Challenge students to use the word while speaking and writing."

After students read the book and learn about underpaid janitors and protests, the guide tells teachers to help students apply these concepts to their lives.

They do that by brainstorming about problems they believe exist in their school.

In case the kids can't identify any problems worth protesting, the Zaner-Bloser authors helpfully offer an example: "No talking allowed in the lunchroom."

The authors even suggest a solution: "Protest by making signs and marching."



So here you have a Common Core-aligned lesson instructing third-graders how to stage a public protest against their adult school leaders. They're essentially being groomed to be future members of labor unions, or at least to sympathize with the organized labor point of view.

We have teachers – teachers! – who are showing 8- and 9-year-olds how to be defiant and unruly.

We certainly hope they don't teach them the standard SEIU procedure for dealing with classmates who become "scabs" and cross their protest line.

In case you're wondering, nowhere in the "Rights and Responsibilities" teachers' guide is there any mention of the founding of America, our God-given rights enshrined in the Constitution or the protection of individual rights through limited government.

But we shouldn't be too surprised. Traditional American values quickly lose their value when left-wing activists control the classroom.

That's why it's so important that parents pay attention to what's going on in their children's school. I implore you to find out what your children are being taught.

There is an organized effort to push these radical ideas on very young kids. Only parents and other citizens have the power to put an end to it.



# COMMON *Core State Standards* FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS:

## A Leadership Opportunity for Community College Trustees

BY PAUL E. LINGENFELTER

“School reform” has been an American preoccupation for more than a quarter century, but few would claim we have made significant progress toward the goal of widespread educational achievement. Roughly 30 percent of high school students fail to graduate in four years, and the number of students with high school diplomas who require remedial work in college is far too high. We clearly must do something different in order to achieve better results.

Inadequate readiness for college work is not simply a K-12 problem, nor does the full responsibility for remedial education lie with community colleges. Educators at every level and trustees of all colleges and universities have a critical leadership role to play in increasing the knowledge and skills of the American people. No sector and no educator can dodge a share of the responsibility.

If used as a lever on other systemic issues, the recently developed Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors’ Association could become a powerful catalyst for significant improvement.

# ROUGHLY 30 PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FAIL TO GRADUATE IN FOUR YEARS.

In part, the Common Core State Standards emerged as a matter of economic necessity — K-12 leaders have found it prohibitively expensive to develop and implement unique standards and assessments for each state. But the educational benefits will be far more significant than the economic benefits. While the important dimensions of human knowledge and skill cannot be exhausted by any compendium of learning objectives, the abilities to use language and perform quantitative analysis are fundamental to everything else.

The Common Core State Standards initiative aspires to:

1) define the knowledge and skills in English and math that, at the end of high school, would signify that a student is ready for success in college or a career; 2) define the learning progression through elementary and secondary education needed to achieve college and career readiness; and 3) provide valid, formative, and summative assessments of student progress toward college and career readiness through each stage of elementary and secondary education.

The guiding principles behind the standards have been “fewer, clearer, higher, evidence-based, and internationally benchmarked.” Virtually all who have studied the Common Core State Standards agree that the capabilities of U.S. high school graduates will be dramatically higher if these learning objectives are widely achieved. Significant educational progress may be within our grasp if educators throughout the United States can stay tightly focused on these learning objectives and develop curricula and instructional approaches that will help students achieve them in far greater numbers. Shared learning objectives, supported by a widely accepted “yardstick” for assessing student achievement, could become an enormously constructive and powerful tool.

Why are common learning objectives needed? Confusing, multiple standards keep students guessing (often wrongly) about their preparation for college and work. States have wasted valuable resources by continually reinventing the wheel independently with no material differences in substance, but too-wide variability in the level of expectation. Simply put, confusing, multiple standards have been an obstacle to educational progress.

A national consensus on math and English-language skills is both possible and highly desirable. In fact, we have always had an implicit consensus in these fields; it is irresponsible not to articulate this consensus clearly.

The Common Core State Standards represent a superior product that is worthy of support. It may benefit from fine-tuning over time, but we should not waste time and effort on tiny refinements before implementing this tool.

Of course, consistent learning objectives and uniform assessments in math and English will not automatically generate more student learning. The potential contributions of common K-12 standards can be realized only if:

- The assessments are widely credible in the postsecondary community.

- Elementary and secondary teachers have the capabilities and the curricula necessary to enable students to achieve these learning objectives. Excellent curricular materials and more effective professional training and in-service professional development are critically important.
- Attainment in math and English is complemented by the other components of a college preparatory curriculum: social studies, science, languages, and the arts.
- All entities with a critical role — teachers, school leaders, and colleges and universities — work together more effectively in implementing the standards and promoting continuing quality improvement.

Many postsecondary leaders are working to promote and facilitate the successful implementation of the Common Core State Standards. How will colleges and universities benefit from these efforts? First, high school graduates who meet the standards will be able to enroll in entry-level college courses in math and English without any need for remediation or further demonstration of capacity. Assessments of attainment of the common standards should replace current placement tests.

Second, high school graduates meeting the standards will be eligible for admission to moderately selective colleges and universities. (We now admit many students who do not meet these standards.) Higher levels of attainment on the standards and specific high school course requirements may be required for admission to more selective institutions or programs.

Third, colleges and universities will be able to demonstrate their relevance and willingness to address a critical national priority — the quality of elementary and secondary education — by providing in-service education for current teachers and developing the capability of new teachers to enable students to achieve these standards. Supporting K-12 improvement is vital to the success of postsecondary education and its public support.

Why are community college trustees so important? More than any other sector of higher education, a community college has the ability to influence the community it serves. Community colleges can help their students be more successful while they are still in high school. Community colleges also can advance the capabilities of K-12 teachers by helping them retool to teach these learning objectives and by giving constructive feedback based on student performance in college.

Effective partnerships between community colleges and K-12 schools in their community can lay a foundation for more widespread educational attainment in the United States. Nothing is more important to our future.



*Paul E. Lingenfelter is president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (www.shceo.org).*

## **IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS THROUGH P-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATION**

In November 2010, AASCU, CCSSO and SHEEO entered into a partnership to actively pursue the implementation of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI). Our partnership is founded on the shared convictions that:

- shared goals and expectations for P-12 student learning along with the collective will to achieve those goals will help students, enabled by good teachers, acquire the knowledge and skills needed for success in college and the global economy;
- English Language Arts and Mathematics are foundational for all learning, and proficiencies in these subjects equivalent to basic college entry are essential for all high school graduates, whether entering directly into college or the workforce; and
- in addition to common standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, a system of high quality assessments and a rigorous curriculum with instruction in a broader range of subjects are required for postsecondary education, economic self-sufficiency, and responsible citizenship.

With clarity and consistency across states, the new standards can help move and shape all parts of our education system, including shared expectations across P-12 and higher education boundaries, more aligned curricula and teaching techniques, and assessments that monitor and certify learning achievement toward the goal of making all high school graduates capable of college-level work and success in the workforce.

To achieve these goals, the higher education community must be fully engaged in the standards and assessment initiatives. Previous standards-based reforms have not adequately engaged higher education faculty and academic leaders in setting standards, developing assessments, or incorporating them into policy and practice. David Conley has written that:

State academic standards, developed in the 1990s ... were not anti-college; they just did not give college much thought. The result has been standards and their accompanying assessments have had little effect on the college preparatory curriculum and have not necessarily served to increase the number of students who are prepared for postsecondary education.<sup>1</sup>

Without extensive and deep postsecondary involvement, wide implementation of more uniform and transparent P-12 standards is less likely, and high school graduation requirements are likely to continue to fall short of broadly held expectations for college and workforce readiness. The higher education community has a responsibility to address institutional policy issues that affect alignment, pre-service teaching curricula to ensure graduates can teach to core standards, and collaboration with P-12 systems to help design teacher in-service programs that help high school graduates avoid the need for remedial or developmental course work in English Language Arts and Mathematics at the college level.

At local as well as state levels, the involvement of postsecondary faculty, academic leaders, and policy makers is essential for the successful implementation and long-term sustainability of the CCSSI and associated assessments. Success will require P-12 and higher education institutional and statewide policy changes in areas such as admission and placement criteria, financial aid eligibility and practices, secondary and postsecondary accreditation standards, in-service and pre-service teacher education, and

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<sup>1</sup> Conley, David. College Knowledge, Jossey-Bass, 2005, page 37.

other areas directly related and potentially linked to definitions of college readiness in the Common Core State Standards. It is only through collaborative development of shared understandings of student performance in English Language Arts and Mathematics that the goal of the CCSSI can be achieved in separately governed segments of the American education marketplace.

AASCU, CCSSO, and SHEEO will work intensively over the next two years to provide leadership, encouragement, and support for their members as they work together in individual states to implement the standards and new assessments. To begin this work, a Steering Committee, with representatives from each partner association, will be convened to conceptualize and oversee the preparation of a guide for higher education and P-12 leadership in implementing the Common Core Standards and Assessment Initiatives, and in addressing the related issues of teacher preparation and in-service professional development. The partnership between AASCU, CCSSO, and SHEEO is intended to be a visible, influential example of P-16 collaboration within the broad educational community. Through SHEEO's involvement in the states and AASCU's participation in the Washington, DC community of postsecondary associations, we will strive to inform and learn from other P-16 initiatives involving all sectors of postsecondary education, including community colleges, independent institutions, and research universities.

Specific areas to be addressed in the implementation guide include:

1. Developing and recommending strategies to engage and promote higher education understanding, leadership and support for the adoption of common standards:
  - a. At the state level, recommending means and strategies for engaging institutions, faculty, and other stakeholders in developing state-wide frameworks, working with their peers from other states and with appropriate researchers and national organizations;
  - b. At the regional and local levels, developing plans, resources, supporting strategies and other mechanisms to sustain and expand higher education engagement during the 4-5 years necessary to establish and implement college-ready standards and assessment systems within districts, schools, and postsecondary institutions.
2. In close cooperation with accreditors (NCATE, TEAC, and the emerging Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) and AACTE, developing and recommending plans, resources, and supporting strategies to help teachers achieve the InTASC performance standards and align teacher preparation and in-service professional development to the Common Core Standards and Assessment Initiatives.

The implementation guide will draw on the practical expertise of postsecondary and P-12 leaders who have been successful in working together in communities, regions, and states. As needed, work groups will be assembled by the Steering Committee to examine each of these areas in detail, and to propose steps to be taken and recommendations to be considered. We expect to complete the first stages of this initiative within six months, quickly enough to inform implementation initiatives in the states moving most rapidly to implement the Common Core State Standards. The principles of continuous learning, adaptation, and improvement will be employed in this process.

The Steering Committee will continue to oversee all working groups and advise the execution of strategies in each association that will promote nationwide implementation of the institutional and statewide policy changes necessary to realize the objectives of the CCSSI.

# College Readiness Partnership

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

May 15, 2013

### Presented To

- Tony Evers, State Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction
- Morna Foy, President, Wisconsin Technical College System
- Jesse Harness, Commissioner, CESA Statewide Network
- Kevin Reilly, President, University of Wisconsin System
- Rolf Wegenke, President, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

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# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## Purpose

The College Readiness Partnership (CRP) was formed to assist states in implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), through building partnerships with PK-12 and Higher Education.

## What is the College Readiness Partnership?

- The CRP is a collaborative effort between the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO), funded by Lumina and Hewlett Foundations. And in there is unique voluntary participation by Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU).
- The goal of the CRP is to *promote effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English/Language Arts with a focus on enhancing the intersection of PK-12 and Higher Education.*
- Seven states have committed to participate in this partnership: Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Oregon, Tennessee, and Wisconsin
- Wisconsin's State Superintendent Evers took the lead in responding to a "Call for Applications," which was accepted. The goal of the CRP is consistent with our state's efforts to ensure every Wisconsin graduate is college and career ready.
- The "Wisconsin CRP Team" consists of representatives from: University of Wisconsin System and UW System Administration, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Wisconsin Technical College System, Cooperative Educational Service Agency Statewide Network, and the Department of Public Instruction.
- The initial phase of this work focused on:
  - Exploring how the Common Core State Standards should be implemented to improve college and career readiness for all students;
  - Defining how leaders, PK-12, and higher education, need to work together to improve teaching and learning; and
  - Working to make college and career readiness expectations more transparent and the resulting actions more effective through better alignment of the curriculum, sound student performance assessments, and improved teacher preparation and professional development.
- As a result of this partnership, states will be able to share effective practices and create a policy and process roadmap that can be used to guide the efforts of other states as they work on CCSS implementation.

*"College readiness is not the belief that every student will go to college. It is the idea that every student deserves the opportunity to be educated in a way that prepares him or her for college." D. Lopez, 2008*

## What are the Common Core State Standards?

As indicated on their website, (<http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards>), the Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and experts to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare our children for college and the workforce.

The NGA Center and CCSSO received initial feedback on the draft standards from national organizations representing, but not limited to, teachers, postsecondary educators (including community colleges), civil rights groups, English language learners, and students with disabilities. Following the initial round of feedback, the draft standards were opened for public comment, receiving nearly 10,000 responses.

The standards are informed by the highest, most effective models from states across the country and countries around the world and provide teachers and parents with a common understanding of what students are expected to learn. Consistent standards will provide appropriate benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live.

These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their PK-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school, able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing, academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The standards:

- Are aligned with college and work expectations;
- Are clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Are informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Are evidence-based.

*"There is a lot of talk these days about the need to boost college and career readiness. But the truth...is that most of the current debate is about college readiness. Too often, career readiness is an afterthought. The bar for a career ready student is just as demanding." Secretary Arne Duncan, February 2011*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a result of our work together for over a year, we recommend the following actions to ensure effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards in Wisconsin.

We recommend that the **Department of Public Instruction:**

- Develop an effective strategic communication plan for external stakeholders.
- Coordinate collaborative CCSS and assessment professional development opportunities for PK-16 educators.
- Cooperate with efforts to align higher education expectations with CCSS high school curriculum.
- Ensure a proper cross section of stakeholders is represented in the development of CCSS materials that directly affect higher education and CESAs.
- Consider, in collaboration with Higher Education Partners, the use of PK-12 assessments for postsecondary readiness measures and early warning indicators.
- Promote a balanced approach to college and career readiness which promotes college, career training, and military service, all as viable and legitimate options.
- Develop core CCSS resources that can be customized, in partnership, for distinct groups such as IHE content faculty, IHE teacher education faculty, future educators, administrators, school board members, and other groups.
- Develop a mechanism for convening, hosting, and encouraging collaborative work on CCSS content development in both virtual and in-person environments.
- Through program approval, ensure alignment of all Educator Preparation Programs' curriculum with the CCSS so that all pre-service educators are being adequately prepared to teach using the CCSS upon entering the field.

We recommend that **Higher Education Institutions in Wisconsin:**

- Participate in CCSS collaborative work and development of resources.
- Consider, in collaboration with PK-12 Partners, the use of PK-12 assessments for postsecondary readiness measures and early warning indicators.
- Articulate how the CCSS can increase college readiness and facilitate transitions.
- Continue to support alignment of postsecondary curriculum and PK-12 curriculum.

- Collaborate to provide ongoing professional development in content areas to build capacity of PK-12 educators.
- Support the ongoing development of internal professional development plans for faculty in teacher preparation programs.
- As an ongoing requirement in program approval, ensure alignment of all Educator Preparation Programs' curriculum with the CCSS to ensure that all pre-service educators are being adequately prepared to teach, using the CCSS upon entering the field.

We recommend that the **Cooperative Educational Service Agency Statewide Network (CSN):**

- Ensure alignment of CCSS messaging and materials across and within CESAs.
- In partnership with others, develop resources for pre-service educators and Educator Preparation Program faculty.
- Encourage/market/publicize and assist in the development of professional development opportunities for local districts and teachers around CCSS implementation.
- Continue operating as a network of CESAs, to ensure that there is equity and access to materials and training across the state.
- Work towards hiring more mathematics and reading experts in CESAs, to ensure the proper depth of knowledge required to lead the kind of professional development districts need to implement the CCSS.
- Support the burgeoning work of the CESA Math and Literacy networks.
- Support CESA consultants participating in collaborative development of materials and resources around CCSS.

## **CALL TO ACTION**

All partners who have been at the table during our College Readiness Partnership have gained a great deal from sharing, listening, and learning from one another. We all have a deeper understanding of the great importance of collaboration on this critical initiative. The CCSS's effect on the state agency and all PK-12 schools, on the CESAs and the work they do, and on our institutions of higher education (both content area faculty as well as our Educator Preparation Programs) will be a monumental shift. We thank our leaders for the opportunity for this collaboration and hope that all agencies will consider the recommendations that we have put forth to make the Common Core State Standards become the education reform that it promises to be in Wisconsin.

**Legislative Hearing on Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards  
Northcentral Technical College, Wausau Wisconsin**

Testimony submitted by Charles S. Lenth  
Vice President for Policy Analysis and Academic Affairs  
State Higher Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)

October 30, 2013

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Legislators, thank you for the opportunity to address this hearing to discuss the importance of Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts to higher education in Wisconsin and across the states.

My name is Charles Lenth. I am vice president for policy analysis and academic affairs for the national association of State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). I have spent my professional career working in higher education coordination and policy with state agencies and non-profit organizations—specifically in Illinois and Minnesota, and more generally through SHEEO with all 50 states. SHEEO is a small (currently SHEEO has a staff of 12) professional association serving the chief executive officers and their agencies responsible for providing state-level coordination and policy leadership for higher education. While we exercise no formal authority, we seek to strengthen and build consensus around the roles of states and state policy in shaping the public contributions of colleges and universities in every state. The University of Wisconsin System has been a member of SHEEO since the early 1970s; and Kevin Reilly and several of his staff have been very involved during his tenure.

I am here today for three reasons:

- First, to convey SHEEO's deep commitment to the core principles and purposes of Common Core State Standards for college and career readiness.
- Second, to describe the long involvement of my organization, SHEEO, and the substantial involvement by higher education across the country in the development, extensive review, and adoption of the Common Core Standards.

- Third, to recognize and support my colleagues here in Wisconsin with whom I have been working for several years as part of the multi-state College and Career Readiness Partnership.

Let me take just a minute to outline each of these reasons.

You might ask, “Why are Common Core State Standards so important? Are they really needed?” And, why should higher education care? While there are many responses to these questions, the underlying reasons and rationale for the Common Core can be simply stated:

Over the past decades as more and more high school graduates have gone into higher education, the gaps between K-12 preparation and college-level performance in the core areas of English language arts and mathematics have increased substantially for far too many students. The evidence for this is in the growing need for remedial or developmental programs for high school graduates who enter college directly, and in the generally low but highly variable college graduation rates. Just as worrisome, prior to the Common Core there was scarcely any discussion or collaborative action involving both K-12 and college-level educators to address this growing gap between median student preparation and accepted college-level expectations. This is the gap that Common Core Standards will address; none of us—whether students, parents, faculty, or policy makers—can afford to let this gap in preparation continue.

In addition, both K-12 and higher education must take into account the changing expectations of employers and the workplace, and take full advantage of ways to educate more students to meet these workplace expectations and opportunities. Standards-based education is not new, but what Common Core State Standards represent is a substantial advancement in how we develop, focus and use standards to improve the preparation of students beginning at an early age, and in how we link these standards more effectively to the postsecondary options and opportunities students will face in today’s economy and tomorrow’s world.

Finally, the Common Core Standards embody competencies and skills essential for all students, regardless of where they go to school, how many times their families move, where and what types of postsecondary education and training they pursue, or even what fields of study or types of employment they undertake. Common Core State Standards are the basis for educators at all levels to create

high quality learning environments in which teachers, administrators, and local districts will be challenged to make independent decisions about the best curricula, materials, and teaching styles to support student mastery of 21<sup>st</sup> century global learning and skills.

Despite these overarching reasons, SHEEO's commitment to the Common Core was not made without a good deal of thought and discussion. Agreeing on such transparent standards for student preparation represents something rather new in higher education. Yes, we have used high school course requirements, SAT or ACT test scores, and a variety of other qualification and selection criteria, but none of these communicated clearly to students, parents, teachers and schools what being prepared for college or work really requires. In mid-2009, after substantial member discussion and vetting, the SHEEO Executive Committee adopted a position paper strongly endorsing the work of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers in developing the Common Core Standards to serve this very purpose.

Throughout the development, field review, and final revisions leading to the release of the agreed-upon Common Core Standards in 2010, SHEEO actively worked with our state-level members and their institutions to broaden higher education engagement, organize and encourage faculty review and input, and begin discussion of their impact on state policy and institutional practices. SHEEO distributed drafts of the standards to our state members, encouraged them to circulate and gather review comments and suggestions for improvements, and then funneled these review materials back to the appropriate agencies and individuals to ensure their consideration. Another higher education association deeply involved early on was the American Council on Education, which played a role parallel with SHEEO to encourage input and support from the discipline-based organizations in mathematics and English language arts.

One manifestation of SHEEO's continuing support and involvement is our active collaboration with a variety of other associations to ensure broad understanding and informed decision-making about the Common Core State Standards within higher education. In 2010 we organized a joint summer meeting with the Council of Chief State School Officers as a way to encourage and support much more open communication and active working relationships between our higher education members and their K-12 counterparts at the state level. In early 2011

we partnered with the James B. Hunt, Jr. Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy to invite leading higher education associations (the presidential, institutional, faculty and trustee associations) to a two-day meeting at the University of North Carolina to encourage their respective leadership roles with the different sectors of higher education. As faculty and administrative leaders in higher education become familiar with the Common Core State Standards, almost without exception, they recognize that students will benefit, colleges and universities will benefit, and ultimately our country will benefit in taking this step.

One example of this growing acceptance is the College and Career Readiness Partnership, which SHEEO entered into with CCSSO and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). The purpose of the College and Career Readiness Partnership (which we call CCRP) is to help ensure collaboration across K-12 and higher education at the state level, and to encourage broad institutional, regional and local engagement across sectors in implementing and using the Common Core. Despite already full agendas and limited resources, seven states, including Wisconsin, stepped forward to participate in this Partnership. Let me take a moment for some highlights.

- In mid-2011 state CCRP teams were formed in seven partnership states—Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Tennessee, Oregon and Wisconsin—led by the chief state school officer, the SHEEO and a leading AASCU institution president. The Wisconsin team, which includes leaders and active members from the Department of Public Instruction, the University of Wisconsin System, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Saint Norbert College, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and CESA Statewide Network, is a model for other states—broader, more diverse, and cross-sector—with participation at both state and local levels.
- During and between two multi-state meetings, one hosted by the University of Memphis and one co-sponsored with the State of Kentucky, the seven state teams were tasked with setting up a collaborative state implementation structure, developing an implementation plan or principles, developing a communications strategy to reach a variety of state audiences, and encouraging broader regional and local collaboration. The Wisconsin team prepared a set of College Readiness Partnership Recommendations for actions to be taken by the DPI and



school districts, by higher education institutions, by schools of education, and by the Cooperative Education Service agencies around the state.

- This past summer the CCRP entered Phase II, adding an additional eight states to the partnership (Arizona, Connecticut, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, New York, South Dakota and West Virginia). Currently we are planning the first convening of this larger group of states to review the progress being made at the state and local levels and to continue the development of a set of communications tools and substantive resources to be shared across all states. Although there are several such multi-state, Common Core-focused projects, the degree of collaboration, state leadership, local involvement and in-kind commitment of the College and Career Readiness Partnership is notable, and I look forward to continuing to work with the exceptional Wisconsin team.

Since the time allowed for oral testimony is short, I have included a set of materials with my written testimony; these include:

- The 2009 SHEEO organizational statement of support for Common Core and press release in September 2009 that illustrates our early involvement with the Common Core.
- A short article in the Community College Trustee Quarterly by Paul Lingenfelter that presents a rationale for higher education engagement and support for the Common Core
- The concept paper (November 2010) outlines the purposes and plans for the AASCU/CCSSO/SHEEO College and Career Readiness Partnership, and finally,
- The College Readiness Partnership Principles developed by the Wisconsin CCRP team and adopted by Wisconsin education leadership in May 2013.

Let me close by paraphrasing SHEEO's past president, Paul Lingenfelter, in a statement prepared on behalf of all of our members.

For good reason, higher education has an instinctive, negative reaction to "standardization." The diversity of institutions and programs is surely one of the hallmarks of the quality of higher education in Wisconsin and throughout the nation. There is great virtue in this diversity, in competition, and in an active marketplace of different approaches and education providers.

But there is a vast difference between “anything goes,” and everything must be standard, “one size fits all.” Within the rich diversity of America and American education, we have many important commonalities. We all use the same mathematics. We sometimes speak different languages, but English is the common language for communication and the language for instruction and research throughout American higher education. People who do not master mathematics and the English language suffer when they are not well prepared in English and mathematics, and as they move through life in our country. We all suffer when they are unable to realize their potential, pull their weight in the workforce, and contribute to a positive quality of life in our communities.

The Common Core State Standards are not a “one size fits all” approach to education. They simply recognize that for calculating and communicating we **have** standards. Those standards should be clear to students and to teachers, and then acknowledged by all of higher education. Students deserve to know as clearly and consistently as we can communicate what they need to learn in order to be successful in higher education and in life.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak and for your attention. I would be pleased to respond to questions.



To Empower Americans to understand, enjoy and preserve the freedom and moral responsibility embodied in America's founding principles.



**Art Thompson - Chairman**

Art Thompson was born in Seattle, Washington in 1938. Art attended the University of Washington, the Washington Military Academy and other business-related institutions, before going into business for himself. He joined the staff of the John Birch Society in May, 1964 and became a successful Area Coordinator for the Society in the 1970's. He left the staff to go back into business in 1981 and returned to the staff again in the 1990's. In the 1980's and early 90's, Mr. Thompson's business took him all over the United States. A frequent visitor to Western Europe on business, as a tourist, and once on a political fact-finding tour for the JBS, Mr. Thompson was at the Berlin Wall as it was coming down. During this tour, he became acquainted with many businessmen, academics, and members of the German cabinet and European Union. Mr. Thompson has also served on his small town City Council, as the chairman of his local Chamber of Commerce, as an official and an elector for the Republican Party, and as a local leader in the state of Washington for the Christian Coalition. He also served as an officer in the Select Reserve Force of the Army and National Guard.



**John F. McManus - President**

John F. McManus joined the staff of The John Birch Society in 1966, serving originally as a field coordinator for several New England states. In 1968, he was transferred to a position at the Society's national headquarters. In 1973, Mr. McManus accepted appointment by Robert Welch, the Society's Founder, as the organization's Director of Public Affairs. In this post, he became and remains the Society's chief media representative throughout the nation. Mr. McManus has written and produced numerous audiovisual programs. He is in wide demand as a speaker and is the author of several books. In addition to being a regular contributor of articles to The New American magazine, he serves as its Publisher. He is also the Publisher of the Society's monthly Bulletin sent to all members and subscribers. Mr. McManus was named President of The John Birch Society in 1991. Over the years since its summer camp program was launched in 1970, Mr. McManus has served as an instructor. He was instrumental in arranging that this valuable program is now a project of the American Opinion Foundation. As President of this educational foundation since its inception in 2005, he will continue to instruct at the camps as well as ensure that each grows in quality and influence. Born in 1935 in Brooklyn, New York, he is a graduate of Holy Cross College in Massachusetts. He served on active duty as a lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps for three years. For six years before accepting a staff position with the Society, he was employed as an electronics engineer. The father of four and grandparent of several, Mr. McManus has been married to the former Mary Helen O'Reilly of Boston since 1957.



**Alan Scholl - Executive Director & Vice President**

Mr. Alan J. Scholl is Executive Director, and Vice President of American Opinion Foundation, and a member of the Board of Directors. Mr. Scholl has been involved in youth education for over 25 years. He has served as Director or primary speaker at over 50 week-long youth seminars. He has been a keynote speaker for many homeschool, constitutional, and political conferences and gatherings, and has conducted numerous individual live seminars on American Heritage, History, Government, and Culture, among other topics. He has previously served as the National Director of a busy nation-wide Speakers Bureau, and as Chief Operations Officer and Director of Mission and Campaigns for JBS Corporate Operations. Prior to his service with American Opinion and his JBS career, for five years Mr. Scholl was Manager Training Supervisor and Internal Auditor for Patton Vending, a large diversified corporation in California, and was the Western Division Manager for By-Products Corp/St. Louis Serum Co. (Sister divisions of Dexter Corp.) for eight

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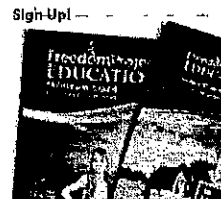


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years. Earning his Initial Associate in Arts at Yuba State College in California in 1975, Mr. Scholl earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration in 2005, and his MBA in Business Administration in June of 2008, at the University of Phoenix.



**Gary Benoit - Member of the Board**

Gary Benoit is the editor of The New American, a biweekly magazine affiliated with the John Birch Society. The New American's mission is encapsulated by the slogan on its cover — "That Freedom Shall Not Perish." Mr. Benoit has been on the staff of John Birch Society since 1977, and over the years his positions with the organization have included eastern manager of the Society's speakers bureau, director of the Society's tax-reform program, director of the research department, and editor of The John Birch Society Bulletin. He has been associated with the magazine since its inception in 1985 and has been editor for most of its existence. Since 1977, Mr. Benoit has taught classes on the principles of freedom and the importance of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, at more than three dozen week-long youth camps for teenagers held at various locations throughout the country. Those camps, originally sponsored by the John Birch Society, are now sponsored by the American Opinion Foundation. Mr. Benoit was appointed to the board of the American Opinion Foundation at its inception in 2005. Mr. Benoit graduated from the University of Lowell (now the University of Massachusetts – Lowell) magna cum laude in physics in 1976. Between his Junior and senior years, he worked through the summer at a nuclear power plant. Gary Benoit and his wife Laurie reside in Wisconsin, where they enjoy being close to their 11 children and 10 grandchildren.



**Larry Greenley - Member of the Board**

Larry Greenley was born in Independence, Iowa, in 1941. He grew up in the Waterloo, Iowa, area, then went to college at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Graduating in 1964, Mr. Greenley received a B.S. degree in Humanities (philosophy) and Science (molecular biology) from M.I.T. After two years of graduate studies in philosophy and psychology at the University of Iowa, Mr. Greenley started his career as a science and math teacher in a public school in southwest Iowa. Although he never returned to college full time, he did study American and European history on the graduate level for many years as a part-time student at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Mr. Greenley spent 24 years of his career in marketing and sales of scientific products for biological research labs. He joined the staff of The John Birch Society in 1996 and is currently the Director of Marketing. In 2005, Mr. Greenley was appointed to the Board of Directors for the American Opinion Foundation and uses his marketing skills to benefit the marketing initiatives of the Foundation. Although Larry lived most of his adult life in the Northern Virginia area near Washington, D.C., since 1998 he and his wife Rosalie have resided in Appleton, Wisconsin.



**Jeff LeClaire - Treasurer**

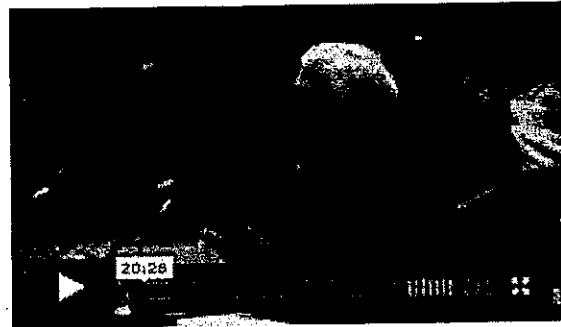
Jeff LeClaire, Corporate Finance Director for The John Birch Society, has served as the Finance Director for the American Opinion Foundation from its inception in late 2005. Mr. LeClaire brings to American Opinion Foundation 30 years of Accounting/Business related experience in manufacturing, insurance, consulting, wholesale/retail distribution, magazine publishing, construction, non-profits, and income tax accounting. Mr. LeClaire holds Associate Degrees in both Accounting and Marketing, a Bachelors Degree in Business Management, and currently possesses a Certified Public Accountant certificate. He has implemented many Accounting software packages over his years of employment, and has attended numerous management and accounting training seminars/workshops over the past 30 years. Mr. LeClaire has recently designed and implemented a non-profit software package for American Opinion Foundation which will be utilized on 1/1/08. He has received training from the Foundation Center in New York City for proposal budgeting. Mr. LeClaire has served as a member of the board of directors of Community First Credit Union for ten years. He has also held volunteer positions on his local church finance committee as well as many other church related positions. He was personally entrusted with the safekeeping of weekly church offerings. Mr. LeClaire served in the United States Army from 1974 – 1977 and received his honorable discharge.



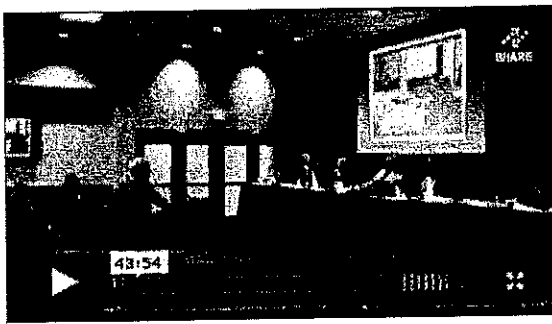
# Defeating Common Core



FreedomProject Education's Student Development Director Mrs. Mary Black testified in Madison, WI against the implementation of Common Core.



FreedomProject Education's Executive Director Mr. Alan Scholl testified in Madison, WI against the Implementation of Common Core.



Dr. James Milgram, a leading authority on Math standards from Stanford University and member of the Common Core validation committee who refused to sign-off on the Math standards, testified in Eau Claire, WI.



FreedomProject Education's Executive Director Mr. Alan Scholl testified in Eau Claire, WI against the Implementation of Common Core.



Dr. Gary Thompson of the Early Life Child Psychology and Education Center, ([earlylifepsych.com/](http://earlylifepsych.com/)) testified in Eau Claire, WI against the implementation of Common Core.

We ask that you consider helping FPE bring in more experts like Dr. Sandra Stotsky to take the stand against Common Core in Wisconsin. These experts do not get paid for their testimony, we simply take care of their travel expenses and lodging. To make a contribution please visit [here](#)

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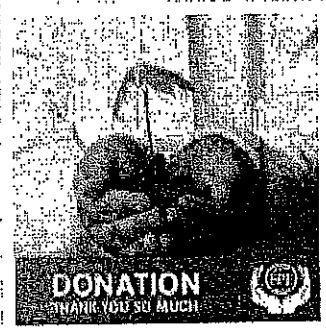


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Senator Paul Farrow  
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Senator John Lehman  
Senator Tim Cullen

From: Rev. Oliver K. Burrows III

Date: 30 October 2013

Re: Opposition to implementation of Common Core State Standards in the state of Wisconsin

My name is Rev. Oliver K. Burrows III. I am an ordained minister, a radio talk show host of three programs addressing issues ranging from Wisconsin sports to addressing economic, social, and political issues from a Christian perspective and, of course, preaching. I am also a member of the Marathon County Board of Supervisors representing District 19 in Weston, Wisconsin.

My past professional experience includes over 25 years in business, most in the information technology field, in sales, middle, and upper level management positions. I have also been an adjunct instructor for five different colleges and universities for more than 30 years and have taught course in more than 20 different academic fields at the technical, undergraduate, and graduate levels as well as served as a research advisor and second reader for AMDRs and theses during that time. I was privileged to teach secondary social studies and serving as an iMentor for an on-line high school for four years here in Wisconsin. Because of my ongoing commitment to

encouraging educational excellence and achievement, I am in the process to developing an integrated K-Ph. D on-line education system that will focus on preparing students for careers in business, education, and ministry in addition to my ministerial, media, and governmental work.

I am here today to speak against the adoption of the Common Core State Standards by the state of Wisconsin for a number of reasons. First, I am concerned that the adoption of standards that have been funded through grants funded by the Department of Education will be detrimental to the ability of the over 400 school districts in this state to maintain local control and autonomy over their curricula. Having written curricula for high school course in Economics, World Cultures, Government, and Topics in European History at the secondary level and used “canned” curricula at the post-secondary level for almost 30 years, I understand the need for communities, whether academic or governmental, to exercise control over both what and how their students learn. Having seen the failures of previous federally-funded efforts such as Outcomes 2000 and No Child Left Behind, I am skeptical as to what the new efforts associated with the implementation of Common Core State Standards are likely to achieve. Having taught the History of Constitutional Law at both the secondary and post-secondary levels, I am also concerned about the continued expansion of the federal authority over public education from both a constitutional and practical point of view. Even setting aside the constitutionality of federal control over education, having standards developed and overseen by individuals, however well-meaning, without feet on the floors of Wisconsin classrooms is not in the best interests of our students, post-secondary institutions, and businesses.

Second, my analyses to date have not yielded any comprehensive analysis associated with implementing Common Core State Standards in terms of costs ranging from new textbooks to teacher training. As I teach in my cost accounting and finance courses, successful projects are

always associated with sound cost-benefit analyses, and even in Marathon County, each of our resolutions must be accompanied by an accurate fiscal impact statement before they can be brought before the Board for its consideration. I believe that a more comprehensive cost-benefit analysis should be conducted before Common Core State Standards are accepted and implemented in this state.

Third, given my twenty years in information technology teaching and consulting work, pilot projects are always the best way to minimize implementation problems and possible failures costing organizations hundreds of thousands of dollars. This approach does not appear to have been actively considered by the Department of Public Instruction, and given the possible lack of comprehensive implementation cost data, a series of pilot studies using stratified randomly selected school districts would be an appropriate to increase the possibility of success of any new standards implementation.

Fourth, a successfully implemented course of action in any field of endeavor is based on first defining expected or desired outputs and output measures, with the needed inputs and processes derived from those expected or desired outputs. The assessment criteria associated with the implementation of Common Core State Standards are still under development and have not even been fully "field-tested" at this time, which is a significant reason to at the very least delay their implementation.

Finally, the recent statements attributed to Dr. Tony Evers regarding possible legal challenges he and his department may mount should the legislature reject, delay, or modify Common Core State Standards indicate the need for an advisory ruling from the Attorney General before this matter receives final legislative approval. While I am neither a lawyer nor a judge, I find both

the timing and content of Dr. Evers statement both curious and troubling, and I believe it is incumbent upon this committee and the legislature and executive branch of this state to have the Attorney General weigh in on this matter before any more funds are expended by the Department of Public Instruction for either implementation costs or legal fees.

In light of the aforementioned points, I would respectfully urge this committee to recommend delaying further implementation of Common Core State Standards in the state of Wisconsin until these questions and those raised by other concerned parties are fully and factually answered.



## Testimony to the Wisconsin Select Committee for Review of the Common Core Standards Initiative

Michael J. Petrilli  
Wausau, Wisconsin  
October 30, 2013

Senators and Representatives: It's an honor to be with you today. My name is Mike Petrilli; I'm the executive vice president of the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a right-of-center education-policy think tank in Washington, D.C., that also does on-the-ground work in the great state of Ohio. I was honored to serve in the George W. Bush Administration; my boss, Chester Finn, served in the Reagan Administration. Perhaps most importantly, I was raised in the Midwest, in St. Louis, Missouri. It's great to be back in the heartland. (Go Cardinals!)

As a strong conservative and a strong supporter of the Common Core, I'm here to urge you to stay the course with these standards and with the Smarter Balanced assessments.

Still, unlike some other Common Core supporters, I'm glad that you are holding this hearing and debating the issue of whether Wisconsin should stick with the Common Core. These standards were developed by the states, and to be successful, they need to be owned by the states. Our educators are all too familiar with the "flavor of the month"—reforms that come and go. They are wondering if they should wait this one out too. By having this open debate on the Common Core, you can settle the issue once and for all—and either change course or move full speed ahead.

It's also true that when states, including Wisconsin, adopted these standards three years ago, there wasn't nearly enough engagement of parents, teachers, or policymakers. I believe a lot of the resistance we're now seeing to the Common Core is because many people are just learning about them for the first time, and want their voices and concerns heard. So hearings like this one are critically important.

Today I want to address some of the common concerns we hear about the Common Core standards. Before that, though, I want to remind us what this effort to raise standards is all about.

At Fordham, we believe that smart education reform combines two big strategies: Expanding parental choice, and setting and implementing rigorous standards. Wisconsin can be proud of its record on the first—school choice. Home to the nation's first voucher program, recently expanded statewide, as well as an active charter school sector, the Badger State should be commended for its efforts to make options available to all parents that in many states are still reserved for just the well to do.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about Wisconsin's work on standards based reform. I don't think it's unfair to argue that Wisconsin has one of the worst records in the country when it comes to setting strong standards and rigorous tests, and your results show it.

Let's start with the standards Wisconsin had in place before the Common Core. In 2010, we reviewed the English and math standards of the fifty states, and compared them to the Common Core. We've been doing similar reviews of state standards for fifteen years. And the results? The Common Core standards were good enough to earn an A-minus in math and a B-plus in English, significantly better than the grades of three-quarters of the states, and on par with the rest.

And Wisconsin? Your English standards received a D from our expert reviewers, and your math standards received an F. They were among the worst standards in the country.

What was so bad about them? Let me quote from our review, first for English:

*While Wisconsin's standards include some clear and rigorous content, their failure to delineate grade-specific expectations leads to the omission of much critical K-12 content, beginning with early reading. Only three standards touch on any content related to phonics, phonemic, or phonological awareness...Vocabulary standards are inadequate and omit such important content as synonyms, antonyms, compound and multiple meaning words, and denotation. With the exception of [one overly-broad standard], the state fails to include any standards that reflect the importance of reading American literature...*

*Nor does Wisconsin provide explicit guidance regarding the amount, quality, or complexity of texts that students should be reading each year, much less any actual titles. The state fails to include expectations that clarify the characteristics and quality of writing that students should produce in each grade. In addition, standards addressing English language conventions are vaguely worded and omit some essential grade-appropriate content.*

And now for math:

*The standards are missing much essential content. Single-digit number facts are to be recalled, but not quickly or instantly. Whole-number arithmetic has basically no development and is missing both fluency and standard methods and procedures.*

*[The standards equate] calculators with pencil and paper methods. In the continued standards on arithmetic in eighth grade, common denominators are not mentioned, and the standard algorithms are undermined with "computational procedures for rational numbers" such as: [C]reating, using, and explaining algorithms (grade 8). This gives alternative algorithms the status that standard methods should have.*

Now, perhaps Wisconsin could overcome the weaknesses in its standards by producing a rigorous test. But that has not been the case. In fact, Wisconsin's reading and math tests are among the weakest in the country. In another Fordham Institute report, [The Proficiency Illusion](#), we found that Wisconsin's proficiency cut scores—the level of reading and math skills that it took to get a passing score—were significantly below the average for all states studied. That's saying a lot, as cut scores nationwide are notoriously low.

To be specific, we found that Wisconsin set its third grade reading proficiency cut score at the 14<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally. That means that you could be reading worse than 86 percent of the students in

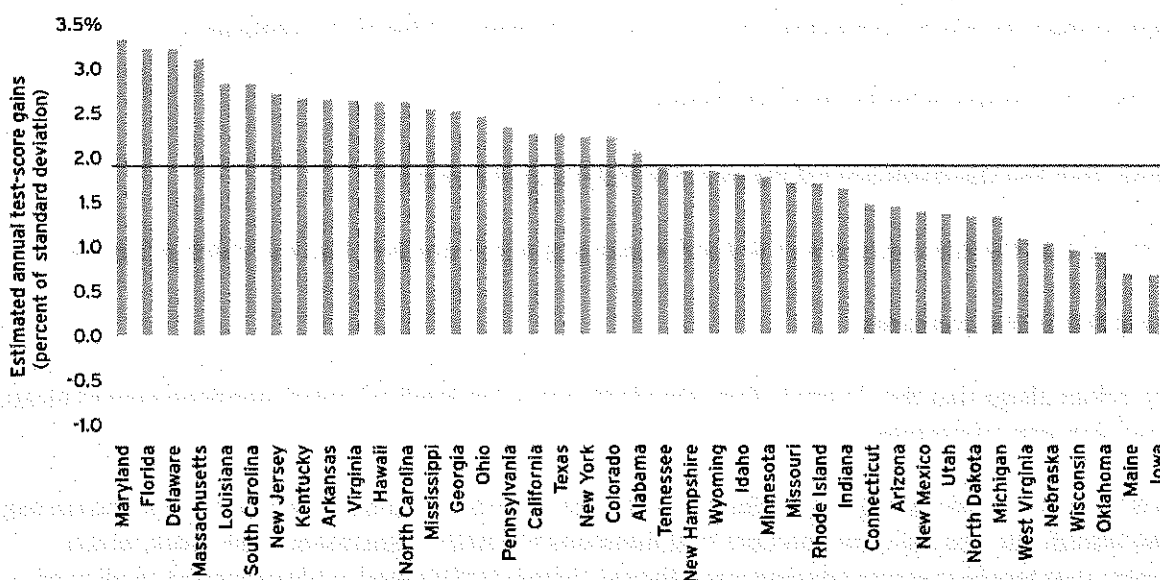
the nation, and the state of Wisconsin would tell you and your family and your teachers that you were doing fine.

Is it any wonder, then, that many young people in Wisconsin arrive on colleges like this one unprepared to do college level work? And are then dumped into remedial education, meaning that their parents, or taxpayers, have to pay twice for a high school education? According to a recent study, Wisconsin taxpayers could have saved some \$66 million in 2007-08 on such remediation.

And what was the result of years of vague, low standards and ridiculously easy tests? While other states were making big gains in reading and math, Wisconsin was standing still.

### State Test Score Gains Vary Dramatically (Figure 2)

*Maryland, Florida, and Delaware improve as much as Iowa, Maine, and Oklahoma trail.*



NOTE: The bars represent overall annual rate of growth in student achievement in math, reading and science in 41 U.S. states, from 1992 to 2011.  
 SOURCE: Authors' calculations based on National Assessment of Educational Progress

Only three states in the country have made less progress than Wisconsin in boosting achievement in math, reading, and science since the early 1990s.

So let me ask you: Is this good enough for Wisconsin? I don't think so, and I don't think you think so. Wisconsin clearly needs a new approach.

### Enter the Common Core

In the mid-2000s, the nation's governors and state superintendents started to acknowledge that their own standards and tests were not rigorous enough to prepare students for what comes next: Either

college or a good paying career. So they agreed to collaborate on a new set of standards that would be guided by the best research and evidence, be modeled after the standards of high performing states and nations, and that would ensure that high school graduates would be ready for success in college and career. At the end of the process were the Common Core State Standards.

They aren't perfect. As I mentioned earlier, they received an A-minus and a B-plus from our reviewers, respectively, for math and English. But they're pretty darn good. The math standards are incredibly solid on arithmetic, expecting students to know their math facts cold, to memorize their multiplication tables, to use standard algorithms, and not to use calculators until they are older. The English standards ask schools to bring back rigorous content in history, science, art, music, and literature. That's why E.D. Hirsch, founder of the Core Knowledge program and author of *Cultural Literacy*, is such a big fan of them. They ensure that students read great works of literature and solid non-fiction sources too, like the nation's founding documents.

So why is there so much controversy? Let me respond to some of the major critiques:

First, that the standards themselves are flawed.

Second, that the standards are creatures of the federal government.

And third, that the standards open the door to inappropriate intrusions into our children's privacy.

### **The quality of the standards**

Some critics allege that the Common Core standards inappropriately prioritize nonfiction over literature in language-arts classrooms.

This is based on a misreading—or deliberate manipulation—of a two-paragraph section found on page 5 of the introduction to the Common Core that mentions the NAEP assessment framework, which suggests that teachers across content areas should “follow NAEP's lead in balancing the reading of literature with the reading of informational texts, including texts in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.” Following NAEP's lead would mean that fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders would spend 50, 55, and 70 percent of their time (respectively) reading informational text.

Some critics have led people to believe that these percentages are meant to direct learning exclusively in English classrooms. They are not. In fact, the Common Core immediately clarifies that “the percentages...reflect the sum of student reading, not just reading in English settings. Teachers of senior English classes, for example, are not required to devote 70 percent of reading to informational texts.” Reading in social studies and science class would count too.

Dr. Sandra Stotsky, who the committee heard from at a prior hearing, and others have also charged that the Common Core will push high-quality literature out of the classroom. Balderdash. In fact, the standards devote a disproportionately large amount of attention on demonstrating the quality, complexity, and rigor of the texts students should be reading each year. Appendix A includes a list of “exemplar” texts, the vast majority of which are works written by literary giants like Thoreau, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Harper Lee, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. The small number of technical documents included



in these lists is dwarfed by the volume of great authors, works of literature, and literary nonfiction that the standards hold up as exemplary.

In fact, just the other day, Politifact declared the allegation that Common Core pushes classic literature out of the curriculum to be “false.”

And what about math? Some critics allege that the Common Core standards promote low-level mathematical skills or that they prioritize mathematical “practices” or “fuzzy math” over critical content. Again, a close reading of the standards reveals the opposite is true.

The Common Core math standards prioritize essential content. In the early grades, this means that arithmetic is heavily weighted, that students are asked to learn to automaticity their basic math facts, and that they are asked to master the standard algorithms. This is content they need to know—cold—in order to be prepared for the upper level math work they will do in high school and beyond. If there is one thing we know with certainty, it’s that math is cumulative. You can only move on to more advanced content when you have fully mastered essential prerequisite knowledge and skills.

Some critics complain that the standards don’t require Algebra in the eighth grade, something that many think is essential to prepare students for advanced math in high school. The reality, however, is that the Kindergarten through seventh grade Common Core standards include all of the prerequisite content students will need to have learned to be prepared for Algebra I in the eighth grade. And that means that it’s the states, districts, and/or schools who decide for themselves course and graduation requirements. In fact, this committee has heard from numerous school and district educators and leaders who have testified both in favor of the Common Core and noted their use of Algebra in the eighth grade.

Some have implied that few mathematicians signed off on the quality of the standards. Again that’s simply not true. The committee that wrote the standards included over a dozen academic mathematicians, including its chairman, a mathematician from Harvard. These are not acolytes of fuzzy math. And the quality of the standards shows it.

What’s more, research by William Schmidt, a leading expert on international mathematics performance and a previous director of the U.S. TIMSS study, has compared the Common Core to the standards of high-performing countries in grades K–8. The agreement was very high between the Common Core math standards and the math standards in place in the highest performing nations. In fact, Schmidt and his colleague found that no state’s previous math standards were as close a match to those of high-performing countries as the Common Core.

Perhaps even more critically, Schmidt’s research found that “states whose previous standards were most similar to the Common Core performed better on a national math test in 2009.” That means that, across the nation and the world, students whose learning was driven by standards that closely resembled the Common Core fared better than students who lived in states whose standards looked very different.

## **The Federalism concern**

The second major charge against the Common Core is that they are creatures of the federal government. Here I have more sympathy with the critics. It's certainly true that President Obama politicized the standards by using federal Race to the Top dollars to coerce their adoption by the states. It got even worse when the president took credit for the common standards every time he had a chance on the campaign trail—and when he did it again in this year's State of the Union address.

But the history is very clear. These standards started out as a state effort, with support from private entities like the Gates Foundation. It was the governors and state superintendents who came together, voluntarily, to draft higher common standards, because they acknowledged that their own state standards were set too low. There was already momentum behind the standards when the Obama administration intervened.

Thankfully, in my view, Republicans in Congress are working to ensure that not another cent of federal funding, and not a whiff of federal coercion, is allowed going forward when it comes to the Common Core.

The Common Core started out as state standards, and they need to remain state standards. Washington needs to butt out.

## **Privacy concerns**

Finally, some critics of the Common Core have alleged that the standards open the door to invasions of privacy, to data warehouses that will allow the government to snoop on our children and families or even sell sensitive data to for-profit companies.

This is simply not true.

As a parent of young children, I definitely worry about privacy, and recent examples of Big Government and Big Data are unsettling. But there's nothing, repeat, nothing about the Common Core that requires a particular data collection or an assault on privacy, as even the Cato Institute's Neal McCluskey, one of Common Core's sharpest critics, acknowledges.

Wisconsin has strong data privacy laws and practices but could further strengthen them if legislators so chose. However, to be clear, if the Common Core were dispensed with in Wisconsin tomorrow, that would not in any way address these fears about data privacy.

## **Common Core: A conservative victory**

With those rebuttals behind me, let me explain why we at the Fordham Institute are so bullish on the Common Core—why we see them as a strong conservative victory.

**1. Fiscal responsibility.** The Common Core protects taxpayer dollars by setting world-class academic standards for student achievement—and taxpayers and families deserve real results for their money.

Testimony in favor of retaining the Common Core State Standards  
as Wisconsin's ELA and Mathematics standards

Submitted by:  
Lori Williams, Ph.D.  
K-12 Mathematics Specialist  
Manitowoc Public School District  
October 30, 2013

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Lori Williams. I have been a teacher in the Wisconsin schools, specifically the Manitowoc Public Schools, for 27 years. I began as a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom teacher, then moved to teacher leader positions as an instructional coach, a gifted & talented program coordinator, and now as a K-12 mathematics specialist. I currently hold a master's degree from UW-Eau Claire and a doctorate in Urban Education (emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction) from UW-Milwaukee.

Based on my experiences with teachers and students in northeastern Wisconsin since the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, I feel very strongly that this decision has had a positive impact on instruction and student learning and would like to encourage you to do everything in your power to help Wisconsin stay on this course.

In the quarter century that I have been teaching I have never seen an initiative bring teachers together to talk about how we are going to meet the needs of all students in the way the adoption of the Common Core has. The CCSS provide a common set of expectations so that when we get groups of teachers together whether in a school district, across school districts within the state, or across state lines, we can share our expertise about students who have a variety of backgrounds, skills, and learning needs and brainstorm ways to increase student achievement with the increased rigor of the new standards. We have a clear, and much more focused, picture of what the students need to know and be able to do at each grade level and we are creating a variety of paths to get ALL students to those high expectations.

The Common Core Standards have created an unprecedented common framework that has guided conversations and made sharing among teachers easier. But more importantly, it is likely to provide a consistency for learning expectations for the school years of those students who move from air force base to air force base with our men and women in the service, for those students who are forced to move after natural disasters, and for those who just move because their parents change jobs. We as teachers have the power to change the contexts we use during instruction to be contexts that are relevant to the place and time in which we are teaching. For example, in Wisconsin we might measure the weight of a foot of snow on a shed roof, an example that students in Florida might not use, but we are still going to have Wisconsin students be proficient with same standards of capacity and measurement and measurement conversions for which those students in Florida are proficient.

As I said, the Core has provided a framework of rigorous and clear expectations, but it's not a curriculum. A curriculum includes resources, assessments, and instructional strategies - all the pieces that teachers need to teach and to determine if their teaching has been effective. In CESA

7 we have worked together to unpack the standards and determine their meaning which, in turn, helps us develop our own (locally controlled) resources and helps us make informed decisions as we purchase materials that are available from publishers. We have also had cross-district teacher teams working to group the standards into sets to make it easier for districts to create their own materials. But probably the most exciting piece of which I have been a part is the professional development for elementary and middle school teachers. For the past 5 summers I have helped teachers who want to implement the standards learn how the Common Core progression of standards and set of expectations supports learning of math by ALL students. I have with me the most recent posters about changes that are taking place in classrooms.

You can see that teachers report that they are:

- Using precise math vocabulary (Math Practice Standard #4)
- Not talking as much (kids are talking more)
- Having students explain more
- Encouraging learning from mistakes
- Reinforcing varied strategies for approaching problems
- Learning new strategies from students
- Asking students to “prove” they are correct
- Doing more hands-on work / problems
- Having students explain their work in writing
- Not teaching rules that “expire” (i.e., rules that change when they get older and work with different numbers. For example, elementary teachers used to say things like “you can’t take a big number from a smaller number” yet in junior high you can do exactly that and get a negative number as an answer.)
- Not going directly to algorithms
- Not just telling or showing the kids what to do
- Not just using one strategy
- Expecting explanations and justifications
- Asking “What makes you say that?”

And that their students are:

- Correcting themselves / finding their own errors as they explain their work
- Feeling comfortable to build models / use manipulatives to solve problems
- Wanting to share their findings
- Decomposing (understanding) numbers more / better
- Looking at verbs in the story problems
- Reading problems more than once (Math Practice Standard #1)
- Finding algorithms
- Using representations and pictures
- More willing to show their work
- Are asking other students questions
- Teaching each other

One of the most compelling stories I have heard came in the fall of 2011. It was from a middle school teacher who worked primarily with students who were considered “at risk.” That meant

that these students hadn't been successful in math classes prior to entering her classroom and that, due to many factors, they were at risk of failing math again. She used what she learned during the summer to help the students understand math, but more importantly she helped them understand and have confidence that they could do math. I saw her again at the end of that school year. She shared amazing stories of how changing instruction to standards-based was giving access to mathematics to students who hadn't really ever experienced success in the past.

Last week as teachers from this past summer's professional development sessions shared their students' work I listened to how, because the Common Core had provided clear, grade-level learning outcomes for the students, students were experiencing success and teachers knew where they still had to focus instruction. I heard stories of how teachers were able to infuse their own creativity into sample lessons in order to create fun and meaningful math experiences for their students. I heard stories about how teaching basic facts through strategies rather than memorization had been very effective and students were excited about their own progress. I heard teachers say, "The kids actually remember what they learned last year!" "My students with learning disabilities are really starting to participate and improve."

In my work with teachers in Manitowoc, I've heard about success in reading as well as math, "We've never taught those blends so early in first grade – and they got it. They are farther in reading than we've ever had first graders before!"

I believe that much of this improvement in student learning is because at the elementary and middle school levels the Common Core standards are much more focused than any past Wisconsin standards. In math, elementary teachers have been allowed to let go of lessons about probability, statistics, and negative numbers or integers in elementary school. Instead we focus on a few topics that create a strong base. We spend a ton of time in kindergarten, first and second grades helping students really understand whole numbers, place value, addition, subtraction and shapes in ways that are appropriate for 5-7 year olds – with stuff (e.g., manipulatives, graphs, pictures, counters, coins, etc.) in front of them. Then, in third through fifth grade, we add multiplication and division and fractions. Again, following the Common Core standards, we're teaching in ways that allow ALL students to understand and then apply their learning to real-life problems.

When I first started teaching I used to think that students who needed pictures or models to solve math problems were struggling with math. Now, after studying the Common Core math standards, I understand that in countries where more students are successful with math than what we see in the U.S., they use models all the time to develop connections and deep understandings of math for students. If adults in math, science and technology fields use models, why would we take them away from our children?

Finally, since I'm a teacher, I'm not particularly fond of any kind of high-stakes testing. However, because the Common Core Standards are about being ready for independent life after high school, I think the sample items from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (the SBAC) have also helped us as teachers think about the question asked by students in math all the time, "When are we ever going to use this?"

Last Friday I facilitated a grade 7-12 math department meeting where we used one of the grade 7 pilot test items to start our discussion of how we're going to meet our goal for improving student achievement in math. You have a copy of this problem at the back of my paper. As you can see it is a complex, realistic problem where students have to apply their knowledge of addition, multiplication, percents, and converting measurements to help package food baskets for people living in an area hit by a natural disaster.

Similarly, this group of teachers has looked at a high school problem where students have to determine if newly replaced windows have actually lived up to the claim that new windows would save heating costs. That problem asks students to examine realistic heating bills and compare costs when the number of heating days is different from one bill to the other and the cost of the fuel had risen. One of my favorite examples to use with teachers is the fact that more statistics has been added to the curriculum for all students. In the past, probability and statistics has been an elective course taken by a few high school age students. Now these concepts are expected for ALL secondary students. Just think about the number of statistics a typical voter is bombarded with during an election year. As an informed citizen, I need to be able to question sampling procedures and think about, or at least ask the question, does the 75% who agree with the statement mean 4 people were surveyed and 3 agreed or that 400,000 were surveyed and 300,000 agreed.

Teachers and students in Wisconsin are in a good place on a great path because of the clarity, focus, and rigor of the Common Core Standards. There's evidence from the classrooms that this is true. I encourage you to stay the course.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Lori Williams, Ph.D.  
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You are a volunteer at International Food Assistance. This organization delivers "food baskets" to help people around the world. The requirements for each food basket are shown below.

- Here are the requirements for each food basket:
- Contains grains such as rice, wheat or oatmeal
  - Contains legumes such as kidney beans, nuts, or lentils
  - Contains exactly 35 grams (g) of oil for cooking
  - Contains exactly 50 grams (g) of Super Cereal
  - Has a minimum of 2100 total calories
  - At least 8% of the total calories come from protein
  - At least 10% of the total calories come from fat
  - The cost of each basket cannot exceed \$0.75

Here are the contents and quantities of a **Sample Food Basket**:

Food	Quantity	Calories	Protein (1 g = 4 calories)	Fat (1 g = 9 calories)	Cost per kilogram
Rice	800 g	920	9 g	2 g	\$0.58
Lentils	240 g	812	34 g	2 g	\$0.90
Oil	35 g	315	0 g	35 g	\$1.20
Super Cereal	50 g	200	10 g	5 g	\$0.12

This assessment has four questions about planning food baskets. You will examine factors such as nutrition and food prices. The final question requires you to design a food basket using the interactive simulation table. Read and answer each question.

1.

Create an expression to calculate the number of calories from fat in the **Sample Food Basket**.

← → ↶ ↷ ✖

1	2	3	+	-	×	÷	
4	5	6	<	≤	=	≥	>
7	8	9	$\frac{\square}{\square}$	$\square^\square$	( )		$\pi$
0	.	-					

2.

Create an expression to calculate the percent of total calories from protein in the **Sample Food Basket**.

← → ↶ ↷ ✖

1	2	3	+	-	×	÷	
4	5	6	<	≤	=	≥	>
7	8	9	$\frac{\square}{\square}$	$\square^\square$	( )		$\pi$
0	.	-					

3.

Explain how the **Sample Food Basket** does or does not meet all of the requirements for a food basket.

Type your answer in the space provided. Use specific numbers in your explanation.

4.

Bad weather is damaging rice crops, so you need to use wheat **or** oatmeal as the grain requirement in the food baskets. Enter different quantities in the table **Nutritional Value and Cost of Wheat and Oatmeal** to explore the changes in calories, protein, fat, and cost of replacing rice with wheat or oatmeal.

Using your information from exploring in the table **Nutritional Value and Cost of Wheat and Oatmeal**, you need to make a new food basket.

**Part A**

Determine the contents of a new basket that uses wheat **or** oatmeal instead of rice and meets all of the requirements. Enter your information in all six blank cells in the table.

Food	Quantity	Calories	Protein (1 g = 4 calories)	Fat (1 g = 9 calories)	Cost per kilogram
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Lentils	240 g	812	34 g	2 g	\$0.90
Oil	35 g	315	0 g	35 g	\$1.20
Super Cereal	50 g	200	10 g	5 g	\$0.12

**Part B**

Explain how your new basket meets all of the requirements for a food basket.

Type your answer in the space provided.





on the “how” of teaching rather than the “what”.

Three years ago, through the adoption of the Common Core Standards, the educational leaders and state officials elected to act in the best interest of all children. The standards have not been “easy” to implement, but easy has rarely correlated to great achievement or success.

I would ask restraint and patience on the part of yourselves and our other legislative leaders when considering the fate of the Common Core Standards in Wisconsin. Hung-Hsi Wu, Professor of Mathematics at the University of California offers the following advice as how to proceed with the Common Core Math Standards. I believe this could be a roadmap for us to consider as we weigh and measure the effectiveness of the Common Core if allowed to proceed forward as originally intended.

Please note, Professor Wu’s professional history includes membership in the NAEP Mathematics Steering Committee, he is co-Faculty Advisor on the Berkeley Campus of California Teach. California Teach is the program created at the request of former Governor Schwarzenegger to increase the production of mathematics and science teachers by the University of California system.

Professor Wu :

“...Nobody can pass judgment on the success or failure within a year of the kind of profound change promulgated by the Common Core math Standards unless the standards are an immediate disaster (which I hope they are not). I think a more reasonable date to make such a judgment is 2017. If things go well, teacher preparation will begin to concentrate on the most urgent need of the moment: better content knowledge. Math instruction in classrooms will be long on reasoning and short on giving out orders, and textbooks will at least be free of ghastly errors. Assessment will pay equal attention to one-step questions as well as those that require multi-step reasoning. For anyone who is aware of what mathematics education is like at present, such seemingly modest goals, if achieved, would already be cause for celebration.”

I again thank you for the opportunity to present these thoughts and hope we can move forward together.

Sincerely,

Timothy L. Raymond Ed.S.  
Superintendent  
Washington Island School District

Omnipotent God, I thank you for these men and women who are sitting here with the power to decide my great-grandchildren's future. You give wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. I ask that you unstop their ears that they may hear and open their eyes to see truth. Give them the wisdom to protect the souls of our children and bless us all from the abundance of your great love. Amen

Good afternoon, thank you for being here. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

( I see there are some empty chairs with red shirts draped over them. Those are the seats of the experienced and inspiring teachers who are afraid to speak out. Those are the seats of parents who must be at work. )

As I have learned more and more about Common Core State Standards, I have begun to see it as a mighty blue whale. We see a small portion of its back as it skims through the water and are awe struck with its grandeur. But there is more of that huge beast that we do not see. It is below the waterline – out of sight. Common Core was “conjured up” and developed behind closed doors – in deep secrecy. That is why it has taken so long for parents and yes, teachers to see it for what it truly is and become angry, even fearing for our future.

Back to our beautiful beast. What we don't see below the water line are the many, many barnacles firmly attached to it. The more I listen the more times I hear, “That isn't what CCSS is about”. That may not be what CCSS is about, but it is certainly firmly attached, just as a barnacle adheres to its host with the strongest natural adhesive known to man. . CCSS was Bought and paid for primarily by The Gates Foundation and its disbursement of funds was spread to many groups that are promoting this beast. A few million here, a few million there – disbursed in ways to make it more difficult to know his full investment. Most investors expect an “ROI” - a return on their investment. Do you expect me to believe this was pure philanthropy? I see barnacles. The National Education Association receives a bountiful grant and now much of its web site is an advertisement for CCSS. This is just another barnacle. Gates is also a strong supporter of Planned Parenthood because he believes world population should be controlled. At some point, I would expect to find the Gates political agenda in the brainwashing curriculum. Like a barnacle, it will be hidden from view as long as possible.

I read an interesting fact, barnacles protect their species by “swamping their host”- that is exactly what I see CCSS doing. ! Curriculum? No, not part of CCSS, but it is certainly firmly attached – barnacle tight!

Pearson Publishing bought up many of the small publishers – being willing to pay more than a company was worth. So now Pearson can publish the Copy Righted unchangeable curriculum for Common Core under many company names. Talk about a monopoly! Talk about an income stream. Talk about being swamped with barnacles!

Rigorous standards has become a hollow talking point – it seems it must be *repeated by all supporters. We as humans seldom think the same thoughts, use the same words unless we have been instructed to do so, perhaps it could be called group think or group speak. Or just another barnacle. Data mining to decide your child's future? Do you suppose that if your 2<sup>nd</sup> grader bites his pop tart to look like a gun, he will not be allowed to go to college because he likes guns? Every childish impulse will most likely be part of the data that will follow him until he takes his last breath. Should Your child be asked family questions about religion, party preferences, income, and much more very personal information – information that is often beyond the child's knowledge or understanding? – yet another swamping of barnacles. Some of us may remember that Germany & Russia used the children to spy on the parents. Who knows how their data mining will be used. I see so many barnacles –all hidden below the water line, firmly attached. New York is already using sensors to watch a student's reaction to certain subject matter. As I consider the things happening in this Nation that needs to rediscover its soul, I see barnacles at every turn waiting to swamp what we thought was a beautiful beast. It seems each time this whale breaches, more and more barnacles are firmly attached and destroying its beauty.*

If you are paying attention, you know a Sheboygan school sent an elementary student to the office. What did he do? Daring to add a Bible verse to his valentine was considered a crime for possible suspension. What about the teacher who told her student, “No, I can't accept your paper with God as your idol. You have to do better. Oh, yes, Michael Jackson – much better.” As God has been pushed out, I have watched as Evil has crept in. Every

conservative thinking student knows that at least one teacher every school year will ridicule, belittle, bully their thinking. Grades may even be threatened. Students bully students, suicides because their life does not offer hope, no promise of eternity, students on psychotic drugs may become mass murderers. No, this can't be put directly at the door of Common Core, but Common Core is creating a different learning atmosphere than what many of us grew up with. Barnacles where ever you turn.

. I see a firewall of barnacles intended to prevent parental oversight. I see a tsunami of barnacles waiting to swamp this beast with unknown dangers to our children; to our nation once it can no longer be stopped. It is time to help this beast die. It is time to let rigor mortis set in.

I implore you, please Stop it, Nullify it, protect our children. Let's change it to Common Core, rotten to the core is No More!

Ruth Elmer

Grandmother, great-grandmother, retired small business owner.

# CHILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

530 West Main Street  
Chilton, WI 53014  
(920) 849-8109  
Fax: (920) 849-4539

Dr. Claire Martin, Superintendent  
Dawn Bartel, Administrative Assistant

Good evening,

October 30, 2013

My name is Richard Appel. Thank you to the committee for allowing me a few moments to speak to you about Common Core State Standards and the passion I have for reaching and teaching all kids. I served in the United States Army for over twenty-four years retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. I am here to testify on the impact of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) on both the military families and on the impact that CCSS will have on all children as a whole. Besides serving in the US Army for 24 years, I have also had the good fortune to serve our communities and children as an educator for 27 years. I have been a principal at Chilton public schools for the past 19 of those years.

I have deployed to some of the most dangerous locations of Iraq and Africa and have witnessed firsthand what other societies desire as they make every attempt to rebuild and bring back normalcy to their lives. While serving in Iraq, I was responsible for the reconstruction of the educational system along with teacher training and curriculum development. Through all of my missions the message from parents and families remained the same, security, food and water, along with the education of their children for a better tomorrow ALL were their top priorities. A nation and society is only as strong as the educational system that helps develop their youth as tomorrow's leaders.

I believe we have the best educational system in the world. We educate all children no matter what their race, orientation, gifts or disability. Are all of our schools and states equal? No they aren't, but Common Core is the best plan I have seen in my 27 years and is endorsed by the Military Child Education Coalition who represent thousands of military families throughout our country.

## **Why are CCSS so important to military-connected students?**

According to the Military Child Education Coalition there are 1,207,628 military aged students aged 5-18 attending schools nationwide, with the State of Wisconsin educating 8,908 of those students in our schools. Let me tell you about just one case in my school. I recently had a young man enroll in my school from Alaska as his dad was deployed for over a year. He is a phenomenal young man with incredible work ethics, manners and a personality that will serve him with great success in his future. He arrived to us however being quite behind academically due to what he had been taught in Alaska. He recognizes the difference and has asked me for additional support for which we are providing. It's not his fault, nor is it Alaska's schools fault. It's a system error that needs to be fixed.

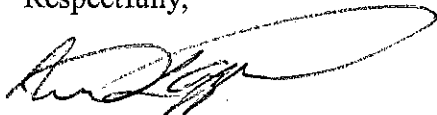
The education experience for many military-connected students can be frustrating. Some students find themselves in a class where they do not have the expected knowledge and skills needed to do well, skills their classmates learned the previous year. Other students find themselves repeating material and are expected to be content to spend class time "reviewing." The adoption and implementation of CCSS are a critical step and particularly important to the mobile military-connected student because they provide consistency, continuity, and clear expectations of the knowledge and skills students need in each grade.

The adoption of CCSS is critically important to our nation. CCSS adoption is particularly important to our mobile military connected students as they move from state to state and district to district during their kindergarten through high school years.

The students and staff in Chilton have embraced the Common Core Standards, not for just the content changes to our curriculum, but the methods for which we are instructing our students. Students are challenged more than ever before as they critically think and problem solve in order to develop the answer that best meets the question. I have never seen the level of team work and higher order thinking skills used as they tackle relevant real world problems. We've come too far over the last two years and to stop the train of progress that I have seen would be a shame.

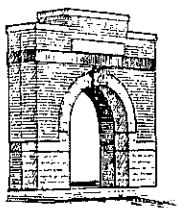
As our service members and their families continually sacrifice for the freedoms we enjoy, passage of Common Core State Standards afford military families one less change to face in their transitions and add one more item of familiarity to their world.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Appel', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Richard Appel  
Middle School Principal  
Chilton Public Schools  
Chilton, Wisconsin

Lieutenant Colonel  
U.S. Army - Retired



# Pulaski Community School District

## Department of Learning Services

143 West Green Bay Street  
Pulaski, WI 54162

(920) 822-6018 ✦ Fax: (920) 822-6076 ✦ [www.pulaski.k12.wi.us](http://www.pulaski.k12.wi.us)

"Ensuring All Students Are Successful!"

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about the Common Core State Standards. My name is Jenny Gracyalny and I serve as the Director of Learning Services for the Pulaski Community School District. I have been an educator for the past 22 years as a middle/high school teacher, middle school associate principal, and elementary principal. I also am a parent of four children ranging in ages from 12-16 years old in the public school system who I feel are gaining an exceptional education which has continued to occur with the adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards. I had an opportunity to listen to testimony during the CCSS Hearing in Madison but didn't have a chance to share my testimony with you. Today I would like to address a few of the questions that seemed to be prevalent during that hearing and provide you with specifics related to their implementation in our district.

During most of my educational career, I have worked with the Wisconsin Model of Academic Standards, which were developed for the content areas, fine arts and Career and Technical Education areas in 1998. Although these were developed in Wisconsin, they easily were out-of-date for the majority of my teaching and administrative career. The Wisconsin Model Academic Standards were only developed with standards/benchmarks for Grades 4, 8, and 12 which led to many differences in interpretation and implementation in most districts and even within schools in the same district of what was expected at each grade level. The Common Core State Standards have expectations for each grade level in math and English Language Arts but more importantly a progression of student learning from kindergarten to Grade 12. With the development of the CCSS progressions, it has allowed our teachers to have a more consistent implementation of learning expectations for our students within our schools, surrounding districts and the state. The standards and benchmarks serve as the guidelines of what our students should know and be able to do, however the craft and art of teaching the standards are still left up to our teacher teams working on curriculum development in our district as well as the classroom teachers.

As you have heard previously, the CCSS were really the result of the National Governors Association and the Council of State School Officers. These two groups recognized the need to clearly define the knowledge and skills that would prepare our students for the 21st century workplace and ensure students were truly college, career and community ready. They engaged teams of experts, educators and stakeholders in developing the CCSS. The CCSS are not a national or state curriculum nor are they federally mandated. As we have unpacked them in Pulaski, there has been local control and decisions made by our school board, teachers and administrators on what is best for our students and the district. Professionally, I find it ironic that three years later as a result of the "politics" in this state, we are looking at reconsidering the adoption of the CCSS. The CCSS really represent an instructional shift from just high school graduation to college and career readiness. For example in English Language Arts, the major instructional shifts include:

- Building knowledge through content-rich informational text
- Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational
- Regular practice with complex text and its academic language and disciplinary vocabulary

The instructional shifts in mathematics include:

- A strong focus on going deeper in mathematic concept rather than going a mile wide and inch deep in the curriculum
- Coherence by thinking across grades and linking to major math topics within a grade
- Rigor and relevance with conceptual understanding, procedural skills and fluency of math as well as true “real-world” application of math

There have been comments recently made that Wisconsin can do better than the CCSS and should have more rigorous standards. PCSD educators would tell you that these are the most rigorous standards that they have encountered and that they have risen to the challenge of ensuring our students to be college, career and community ready. At past hearings, the committee has asked districts how much time and money has been invested for CCSS. We have used several of our professional development days each year as well as release days with substitute costs and summer curriculum days to unpack the standards, align the standards to our current curriculum, adopt resources with a scope and sequence to meet the CCSS shifts and have looked for more authentic ways to assess student learning. Although difficult to put a specific cost to this time, much of our Learning Services yearly budget of \$325,000 plus designated Title IIA funds have been used for professional development, training and resources for ELA, math and disciplinary literacy implementation. School building budgets have also been utilized for resources, collaboration meetings, professional development and much more related to CCSS. As this debate continues in Wisconsin, our science and social studies educators impatiently are waiting in the wings to adopt rigorous, internationally benchmarked standards for their content areas.

There have also been many questions in regards to the assessment component related to the CCSS and whether we are “teaching to the test”. In our district we have had a major emphasis on “assessment for learning” or what we like to call the “check up or physical” of learning. In other words, what we do day-in and day-out in our classrooms to assess what our students have learned formally and informally is of more importance than the state assessment. We believe that with highly qualified teachers delivering quality guaranteed universal instruction of a progressive curriculum aligned to the CCSS, the “assessment of learning” or “autopsy” such as the WKCE or Smarter Balanced Assessment will show quality student achievement and progress. Last spring, we had an opportunity to participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment pilot at two of our elementary schools and the high school. These pilot tests in English Language Arts and math required our students to think critically, be problem solvers, persevere through difficult concepts and apply learning in various performance tasks.

I would like to extend an invitation to you to visit the Pulaski Community School District and our classrooms to learn more about the Common Core State Standard implementation, alignment to our curriculum and authentic assessment of student learning. Being an outsider looking inside, there seem to be far more important educational issues that should be at the forefront in Wisconsin rather than the political pressure and money from anti-Common Core groups who seem to be providing you with misinformation regarding the CCSS. Let us work together and collectively focus on doing what is best for Wisconsin students and their learning and not on the politics.

Yours in Education, Jennifer Gracyalny

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**Jenny Gracyalny**  
Director of Learning Services  
(920) 822-6018  
[jrgracyalny@pulaskischools.org](mailto:jrgracyalny@pulaskischools.org)



October 30, 2013

Good Afternoon,

My name is Rebecca Kurzynske. As a parent, member of the Oconto Falls Public School District Board of Education, former classroom teacher, and administrator with the Pulaski Community School District, I urge you to consider the positive impact that uniform standards have on the education of the young people in our schools. Common Core standards in the areas of Math and English Language Arts provide a common framework which provides guidance regarding the expectations from kindergarten through graduation. These standards are much more rigorous than the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards which they have replaced. By providing standards for each grade level, students who move from one district to another will be able to do so without experiencing gaps in learning that come from a lack of continuity from one district to another. Additionally, these more rigorous standards set the bar higher for teaching and learning in our schools and will better prepare our students for college and careers by providing real world learning experiences within our schools. The standards guide our instruction. However, resources selection, curriculum development, and instructional practice are still determined at the local level based on the needs of the District and its students. As a school board member I have often looked at options for programing, staffing and curriculum but ultimately, the locally elected school board members make the call on what happens in our schools. As a former reading teacher, I see the value in common standards to guide our professional practice, set clear expectations for our students, and measure our success against others throughout the state, the nation, and the world. In an increasingly global economy, these standards help our students prepare to compete!

Additionally, I would ask that you consider the time, effort, energy, and resources our districts have invested in preparing our leaders, educators, students, and families for the shifts to higher standards and greater accountability. Our educators have spent time unpacking the standards, evaluating their current practice, researching educational materials, engaging in professional development related to research-based best practice instructional strategies as they prepared for this year, their first year using the Common Core Standards as their guide.

We have chosen to invest in the education of our Board of Education at the local, regional, and state level so that at a local level, we understand the purpose of the new standards and how we can best support our educators and students. We do this not because we have been mandated to do so, but because we know that it is in the best interest of the students, families, and community we serve. We have also engaged our families by providing

information related to the Common Core Standards and continue to provide resources as our students are asked to learn at a higher level and will be held to higher standards when they are assessed. Our parents are excited about the opportunities available to their students which will help them achieve at higher levels.

I'd like to close with a reminder that standards are not new to education or the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin currently has standards for 24 separate content areas. Standards guide our professional practice by clearly stating what students should know and be able to do. Rigorous standards, such as the Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards will help our educators as they guide our students on their journey to become college and career ready, be competitive in a global economy, and serve as the next leaders of our great state of Wisconsin.

Thanks for this opportunity to share input about the Common Core Standards. Wisconsin made the right decision when these were adopted. Based on what I have seen in a number of settings this effort has had many positive effects on the learning our students experience. To back away after so much progress has been made would be an injustice.



Rebecca Kurzynske  
Director of Personnel and Employee Growth, Pulaski Community School District  
Clerk, Oconto Falls Public School Board of Education  
(920) 822-6002

# TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Oct. 30, 2013

Donald B. Childs, Ph.D.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address issues around the Common Core State Standards for public education in Wisconsin. My name is Donald Childs, and I am the interim superintendent of the Unified School District of Antigo, Wisconsin.

With the rise of globalization and the technology revolution in the 1980's, private industry began its quest for quality management. At the same time, American public education began its quest for school reform. Over the years, these twin efforts evolved: private industry into the quality certification program known today as ISO 9000; and public education into what is now Continuous School Improvement. The parallels are striking. I have attached to my written testimony a side-by-side comparison of these two initiatives.

In private industry, ISO 9000 is a quality-certification status granted industries that have met national standards for the respective industry. In Wisconsin public education, the certification is the School Performance Report, indicating whether schools and districts have met or exceeded standards. In industry, the standards center on product quality, cost, marketing, customer service and employee efficacy. In Wisconsin public education, the standards – the Common Core State Standards – center on mathematics and literacy: reading, writing, speaking and listening. In industry, each firm must design and implement its own processes aimed at achieving the standards. These may include production values, technologies, collaboration, feedback and worker training. In Wisconsin education, each district must determine its unique processes including curriculum, instruction, collaboration, feedback and employee training. In both cases, it is essential to understand that the *processes* for achieving the *standards* are entirely under the control of the local entity, despite what you may have been led to believe. In industry, metrics must be applied to measuring whether the processes are, in fact, achieving the rigorous standards that certification requires. In education, measures must also be applied for the same purpose. They include state assessments, monitoring assessments such as Measures of Academic Progress, AIMSWeb and local, teacher-developed formative and summative assessments, among others. ***In no case in either sector must the standards be confused with any of the other three essential components;*** yet today, critics of the Common Core continuously obfuscate the distinctions among the standards, the processes, the measures and the certification.

In my 51 years' experience in public education, in two states, from impoverished rural districts to wealthy suburban districts, I tell you categorically, the Common Core Standards are the best thing that has ever happened for introducing the rigor and relevance our critics have continually complained is lacking in our schools. And these Common Core Standards are working.

The quality management movement began in post-war Japan under the guidance of its founder, W. Edwards Deming. When Japan's products became the world's gold standard by 1980, American industry sat up and took notice and began to make changes. Japan provides a good comparative model for education, as well. A 2003

study found that Japan's 8<sup>th</sup>-graders attended school an average of 210 days per year, each class each day being a minimum of one hour in length. In those 8<sup>th</sup>-grade math classes, teachers introduced a total of between 8 and 10 new topics over the course of a year. That same study showed that American 8<sup>th</sup>-graders attended classes of only 47 minutes for a total of only 180 days. Yet the American students were introduced to a total of 35 new topics in the course of that short year. It is that clear difference to which State Superintendent, Dr. Tony Evers, refers when he says our education standards have been a mile wide and an inch deep. He is right. Fortunately, the Common Core State Standards address that problem. The 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Common Core math standards introduce a vastly-more manageable – and more rigorous - 12 new topics during the year, a mere one-third of what has been.

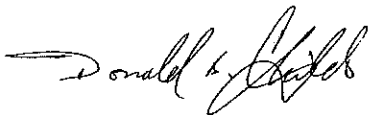
Critics take some pleasure in pointing out the miserable results in the State of Kentucky when the Common Core was introduced. Those results were to be expected because they were delineating a baseline of performance from which to work prior to implementation of the processes leading up to the standards. But Kentucky was the first state to fully adopt and implement the Common Core some two years ago. And today, both the governor and the chief state school officer are strong advocates of the Common Core. Little wonder, since the state has experienced a statistically-significant 2%/year growth in performance scores. Graduation rates have increased in the state; scores have risen; and, interestingly, the costs to state colleges and technical colleges for remedial programs for entering freshmen have actually *declined*.

Finally, allow me to observe that the State of Wisconsin and its 424 school districts have invested 10's of millions of dollars of taxpayer money over the last three years preparing for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. To abandon them now would be a most egregious abuse of taxpayer dollars, rising, in my own view, to a level of legislative misfeasance, if not out-and-out malfeasance, never before seen in our state's history.

Wisconsin's school children need and deserve your unreserved support for the Common Core State Standards.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald B. Childs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".

Donald B. Childs, Ph.D.  
Interim Superintendent  
Unified School District of Antigo

October 30, 2013

To the Members of the Assembly and Senate Special Select Committee on Common Core Standards:

Adopting the Common Core State Standards has been a significant step forward for education in Wisconsin. The Common Core encourages districts to bolster the curriculum that we've developed over time with the literacy skills that have been otherwise relegated to our language arts classrooms. It allows for the implementation of developmentally appropriate literacy education across grade levels and content areas within a school district. It provides teachers of subjects other than language arts with the much-needed structure to teach our content-area state standards with methods that promote the literacy skills demanded by both employers and postsecondary education.

As a social studies teacher, I develop the curriculum for my courses based on the WI Model Academic Standards for Social Studies Instruction; these consists of one or two dozen content standards in each of five social studies disciplines. The standards, however, are woefully bereft of literacy instruction. Aside from a few standards that require the use of different types of sources, the standards are all content-driven. Without the accompanying Literacy in History/Social Studies component of the Common Core, teachers are left without the tools for developing curriculum that places the emphasis on literacy that our students need. Reading and writing are gatekeeping skills, and social studies is the appropriate format for teaching our students many of those skills. The Common Core allows us to do that more consistently and fluidly than we could without them. As President-Elect of the WI Council for the Social Studies Board, I can assure you that social studies teachers across the state overwhelmingly support the Common Core. Many teachers who have felt otherwise unsure of how to teach literacy in their classrooms are now able to use the Common Core Literacy in History/Social Studies standards to enhance their classroom instruction.

By using the Common Core as a framework for developing our curriculum, we are able to ensure that developmentally appropriate skills are being taught in every classroom and that all of the skills that our students need are being fully addressed. For example, if kids aren't doing meaningful writing three times a week, evidence shows they will not make progress as writers. It is unrealistic to expect our language arts teachers to shoulder the burden of providing meaningful feedback on that much writing. The Common Core allows for curriculum across the board that gives students many opportunities to write formally, creatively, technically, analytically, as well as to read from a variety of texts and sources, just like they need to be able to do in their adult life. The Common Core is the only means we have for ensuring that literacy is being taught the way it needs to be taught.

At Brillion High School, we have focused a significant portion of our collaborative work time on integrating the Common Core into our curriculum. Our social studies department has gone through the standards and determined the best places to address them within the courses that we teach. Common Core hasn't supplanted what we were doing in the past; we continue to rely on the WI Model Academic Standards to guide our content choices. The Common Core provides the literacy structure that we need as a department to determine what reading and writing skills will be taught. Having the standards embedded in the curriculum allows us to be accountable to each other as professionals, and accountable to our students. We can now ensure that we are fully addressing their literacy education by assessing their achievement in the standards that we teach.

Common Core doesn't win by default. It's not something that we've deemed "good enough" and thrown into our classrooms. It is based on best practices. Teachers across the state have spent countless hours revamping our curriculum to teach the WI content-area standards with the literacy instruction of the Common Core. The education that results from combining WI content-area standards with the Common Core is outstanding. It is preparing our students for college and career in a way that we are entirely unable to do without the framework of the Common Core.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Yedda Ligoeki  
Social Studies Teacher  
Brillion High School  
Brillion, WI  
ysheller@brillion.k12.wi.us  
(920) 756-9238 x2020

# What's Next?

Jim Scott, October 30, 2013

I want to thank the Chairman and all the members of the Committee for allowing me to testify. Also, I would like to compliment all the Committee members for their undivided attention and engagement, to all the testimony, some of which could be best described as “**mind numbing**.” We have now arrived at a point where we need to analyze all the information and find a solution to our problem.

This is a “**big mess!**” We are truly impaled on the horns of a dilemma. As the testimony has unfolded some consistent themes, messages, and positions have been expressed.

The dominant testimony has come from the DPI and the school districts. They are the ones who stand to lose the most, so they are circling the wagons. The turf they are trying to protect is staked around the investment they have made in the Standards. The message from the SD's is that they have invested a tremendous amount of capital; human, time, and money into implementing CC, and to abandon CC at this point would represent a tremendous loss. From the teacher's and SD's standpoint CC represents an improvement over the old standards, giving them organization, structure, and predictability on which to construct curriculum... Contrary to DPI's claim, that the implementation is at little or no cost, the underlying theme from many of the SD's is that they have invested a **lot** in implementation, see the inflated budget lines for Personal Development and Technology, last time I checked teachers don't work for free. Just preparing for the administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment exam and the reporting of longitudinal data has required upgrading of technology. With these *hidden* costs we may never know the true cost of CC.

All of us have heard the steady drone of weasel words; rigorous, benchmarked, aligned, critical thinking, collaboration, local control, and readiness (the mind numbing stuff). The opponents seem to be embracing a different vocabulary; “one size fits all,” process, centralized control, “top down,” accountability, transparency, and indoctrination. One of the main issues is the process by which we adopted CC. The etiology, genesis, adoption, and implementation appear to be almost clandestine to the general public; bad optics! There's also a concern about loss of local control and academic freedom; maybe not now, but in the future. When you hear that the exam and text are “aligned” to the standard you cannot help but think that teachers have to design curriculum, lesson plans, and instructional maps to match the criteria coming from the Consortia otherwise you risk your students performing poorly on the SBA. This smacks of “top down” or central control, either by intent or induction. The fact that CC is copyrighted also takes away local control since we (WI) don't own it. CCSSI is an extremely complex mess that took years to be established, and now it's time to try to find the truth in all the testimonial fog, and find a solution.

Let's *brainstorm* some solutions....what's next?

We can do nothing. The DPI and SD's can continue, unabated, to implement the CCSSI. We would continue with the same level of accountability and transparency. After all, the Common Core train has left the station, let's just hope it doesn't fall off the tracks, or worse, get in a wreck! It's only our kid's future that's at stake; they can afford to be guinea pigs.

We can “give Common Core a chance.” Allow CC to go through the full implementation process with strictly enforced, zero tolerance guidelines. As we have heard the basic objective of CC is to “improve college and career readiness.” The primary measuring tool is the SBA, therefore, if it's all that it is cracked up to be we should see an immediate and steady improvement in test results. Establish test performance objectives,

# What's Next?

Jim Scott, October 30, 2013

**thresholds** that must be achieved; failure would cancel CC and initiate replacement. ACT, GED, and SAT results (remember they are now 'aligned') could also be included. The initial phase would end no later than 2017. If it succeeds the DPI and SD's will be viewed as true visionaries, the kids will be the winners and the opposition will melt away; if it fails the damage will be limited, however, all of you will have to answer to the parents, and the voters.

There are other guidelines that would "trigger" cancelation of CC such as interference with local control by the NGA or CCSSO through exercising copyright provisions. Also, any actions by the USDOE that would constitute unlawful control over local public education.

We can replace Common Core. Other than the DPI and the SD's there are many who feel that the CCSS were adopted without testing, proper due diligence, are not truly rigorous, not research based, nor internationally benchmarked. CC may be better than the previous state standards, but are seriously **deficient**, and there are **better standards** that can be adopted. Some things we might consider:

Establish an ad hoc or permanent legislative committee charged with adopting and reviewing all school standards and high risk assessments for compliance, integrity, and fidelity. Adoption of standards should be subject to legislative scrutiny before adoption and implementation.

Establish accountability and transparency in the creation, administration, and review of standards and testing.

Why reinvent the wheel? Let's review the successful state standards from Massachusetts, Indiana, and California. We can cherry pick and fine tune what works best for us. **Adapt and adopt.** We know Massachusetts has the best literacy standards and that California has the best math standards....and they're not copyrighted! The Massachusetts literacy standards are based on PRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and the California math standards are based on TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study); both TIMSS and PRLS are already vetted, internationally benchmarked, rigorous, and research based. It is imperative that high school teachers and operative level college professors be directly involved in the design; marginalizing the influence of educational elitists. We would be fools not to investigate the other state Standards and see if they would be a good starting point.

We need to break away from "The Cartel." These are the creators and stakeholders in Common Core that control it and stand to benefit the most from its implementation. They stand to make billions of dollars at the public trough. You already know about the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, the copyright holders. The chief architects are Achieve, Inc.; just look at DPI's Common Core web page, its straight from Achieve. Next we have McGraw-Hill and Pearson Education, both heavy into textbooks and exams, let me utter the words "align" and "conflict of interest" in the same breath! The last big player is Microsoft, remember, we have all that longitudinal data to keep track of; let's thank Bill and Melinda Gates for their \$250M "donation" to Common Core development, and add a few more zeroes to their *net worth*. I am sure there are other bit players, the point is that there is more to Common Core than just helping the kids become more college and career ready...a lot more!



# What's Next?

Jim Scott, October 30, 2013

The NGA and CCSSO need to forfeit their copyrights to CCSS. If they think the Standards are that good the stakeholders should not fear CCSS improvement and modification. Copyrights serve to show "top down" control over tests, texts, and curriculum, and an infringement on local control and academic freedom.

We need to protect the confidentiality of all student data. We need to erect bulkheads or firewalls at both the district and state levels. Academic data should be supplied on an aggregate basis. We can no longer trust the Fed to keep information confidential.

We need to have a regular legislative review process. Regardless of what standards we end up adopting we need to have scheduled review, and a sunset limit established. No single person should have the authority to bind the state to a set of standards without legislative scrutiny and approval.

We need to legislatively define and affirm the breadth, depth, and scope of local control over curriculum. Also, we need to disconnect all financial linkage between standards and state funds. It appears, initially, that some SD's adopted CC because they were concerned that failure to adopt CC would affect their funding and budgets. The DPI has indicated that SD's can adopt any set of standards they want without it affecting state funds, basically, no strings attached. However, there are current calls for private and parochial schools that accept vouchers (state tax dollars) being compelled to adopt CCSS in order to receive state funds. That smacks of a double standard, let's be fair and consistent.

If we do decide to abandon Common Core State Standards and initiate a new process to establish a replacement, it would be in the best interest of the citizens and students of the State of Wisconsin if the Superintendent would step aside and allow another individual to facilitate the change and adoption of new standards. Abandonment of Common Core would essentially serve to be a vote of no confidence in Dr. Evers. It would be counter intuitive and counterproductive to ask Dr. Evers to implement something he didn't believe in.

Indefinitely suspend consideration of Next Generation Science Standards until the CCSS issue is resolved. The NGSS should be subject to the same vetting, legislative due diligence, scrutiny, and approval as all other state standards.

I do not envy the task for which all of you have been charged. The solution will have a profound effect on the future of Wisconsin. We cannot let any type of improper Standards morph "public" education into "government" education. We shouldn't have to settle for second rate standards. It's incumbent on you to protect the best interests of the *students*, even at the expense of the DPI, SD's, special interests, or *your reelection*. Good luck!

Thank you Mr. Chairman.



PO Box 413  
Milwaukee, WI 53201

October 29, 2013

To whom it may concern,

I am a professional mathematician and faculty member in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). I spoke in support of Wisconsin's adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) in Madison on October 2, and I am here today to reaffirm that support, and the support of many of my colleagues. In my previous testimony I spoke to the appropriate level of rigor exemplified by the CCSSM, and stated my belief that most mathematicians would broadly agree with me. Today, I am bringing evidence in support of that belief: attached to this testimony are a very slightly modified version of my October 2 written testimony, together with supporting signatures of mathematics faculty from several University of Wisconsin mathematics, science and engineering departments. (I have been informed that additional signatures will be forthcoming, but I have not yet received them.)

Since the debate on the level of rigor of the CCSSM seems to focus on the precalculus level, I would like to add some personal remarks as to why I believe it would be inappropriate to require all students to take precalculus. Before doing so, however, I note that all parties agree that certain groups of students—STEM-intending students, or students intending to apply to selective universities—should take more mathematics than the minimum expected by the CCSSM. Indeed, a statement to this effect appears in the CCSSM document itself:<sup>1</sup>

The high school standards specify the mathematics that all students should study in order to be college and career ready. Additional mathematics that students should learn in order to take advanced courses such as calculus, advanced statistics, or discrete mathematics is indicated by (+). (p.57)

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<sup>1</sup>Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, accessed from <http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSLMath%20Standards.pdf> on October 28, 2013.

As this statement suggests, if Wisconsin did decide to require precalculus for all students, the quickest and simplest way to do so would be to require all students to be proficient in all high school standards, including those marked with (+). Nevertheless, I hope the State does not take this path, for the following reasons.

1. In mathematics, faster usually does not mean better. Acceleration can work well for the most talented students, but it leaves too many of the rest struggling with partial understanding and, ultimately, negative impressions both of their ability to do mathematics and of the beauty and usefulness of the subject itself.
2. Students who have been given the time and opportunity to master mathematics well through the level of Algebra II (the ‘unplussed’ standards in the CCSSM), and who can demonstrate that mastery on college mathematics placement tests, will place higher than 80% of incoming freshmen at UW-Milwaukee. This number is higher than most UW System campuses, but lower than most UW College or Wisconsin Technical College System campuses. For most institutions of higher education in Wisconsin, it is more important that students truly master Algebra II than that they are exposed to Precalculus.
3. The suggestion that all students must take precalculus in high school is usually linked to the idea that all students should take Algebra I in Grade 8. (The only realistic alternative is that students double up on mathematics courses in at least one year.) To the best of my knowledge, the policy of “Algebra for All” has never been successfully implemented. The best-known case is that of the State of California, where students are not only required to take and pass Algebra courses, but must demonstrate proficiency on the California Standards Test (CST). According to a recent study,<sup>2</sup> 25% of students were indeed able to achieve Proficient in the Algebra I CST by the end of Grade 8, but only 34% were able to do so by the end of Grade 11. (To be clear, that is a total of 34%, not an additional 34%.) In other words, those students who were not able to master the content of Algebra I in Grade 8 (75% of all students!) were extremely unlikely to do so even after multiple repetitions of the course.

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<sup>2</sup> *College Bound in Middle School & High School? Why Math Course Sequences Matter*, Finkelstein et al., Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning at WestEd, accessed from [www.cftl.org/documents/2012/CFTL\\_MathPatterns\\_Main\\_Report.pdf](http://www.cftl.org/documents/2012/CFTL_MathPatterns_Main_Report.pdf) on October 28, 2013.

A second example comes from South Carolina. In 2002-2003, the School District of Charlotte-Mecklenburg instituted a policy of requiring all students to take Algebra I in Grade 8. The following quote from a report issued after the district had reversed course<sup>3</sup> summarizes the results:

Our results indicate that Charlotte-Mecklenburgs acceleration initiative worsened the Algebra I test scores of affected students and reduced their likelihood of progressing through a college-preparatory curriculum. Moderately-performing students who were accelerated into Algebra I in 8th grade scored one-third of a standard deviation worse on the state end-of-course exam, were 18 percentage points less likely to pass Geometry by the end of 11th grade, and were 11 percentage points less likely to pass Algebra II by the end of 12th grade, compared to otherwise similar students in birth cohorts that were not subjected to the policy. Lower-achieving students who were accelerated into taking the course in 9th grade also exhibited significant declines in all outcomes considered. By contrast, higher-performing students who were accelerated into Algebra I in 7th grade, despite receiving lower test scores on the Algebra I test, showed no ill effects on subsequent course completion.

Many other examples from across the country could be cited.

To repeat: acceleration and precalculus can work for many of the best students, perhaps as much as the top 25%, but not for all.

Sincerely,



Kevin McLeod  
Associate Professor, Mathematics  
UW-Milwaukee

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<sup>3</sup>*The Aftermath of Accelerating Algebra: Evidence from a District Policy Initiative*, Clotfeller et al., National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research, accessed from [www.caldercenter.org/upload/Clotfeller-et-al.pdf?](http://www.caldercenter.org/upload/Clotfeller-et-al.pdf?) on October 28, 2013.



## COMMON CORE HEARING TESTIMONY

Good Afternoon. My name is Dr. Lois Alt. I am the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology for the D. C. Everest Area School District.

I am proud to say that Wisconsin has always been a leader in education. We are known for our excellent school districts and our ability to help children succeed—whether they go on to a four-year college, to a technical school or directly into the world of work.

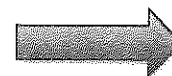
We have been working with content standards for many years, but the Common Core movement is one that has finally given us the tools to share research-based best practices with our peers across the country. At last we can know that students in Wisconsin will reach for the same high standards as students in other states. English, language arts, and math are the foundation for all other subjects. Why would we not want our students to have the same set of clear expectations for success in college or in a career?

Families are more mobile than ever. The Common Core State Standards allow students to move not only from school to school or district to district, but also from state to state knowing that the basic standards are the same. These standards move way beyond memorizing facts and meaningless soon-to-be-forgotten details. The new standards require deeper thinking and problem solving. Critical thinking and application of knowledge are now expected of our students as they make their way in a world where knowledge is constantly changing.

There has been some confusion about how the standards will be taught and what the curriculum will look like. Teachers and administrators in Wisconsin schools will establish curriculum as they currently do. But now they will have specific end points to work toward. They will continue to create lesson plans and tailor the instruction to their specific students.

If we were to back down now from the highest standards Wisconsin students have ever had, we would be sending a very serious message of uncertainty to our students and to our school districts. Our schools have made significant progress in aligning these rigorous standards to a curriculum that is challenging and appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Assessments have been created and are due to be implemented already in the 2014 – 2015 school year that measure student achievement around the Common Core standards. These assessments will also provide feedback to teachers and principals to help more students succeed. Specific populations can be targeted for additional resources as we attempt to close achievement gaps that are based on the Common Core.



Setting the bar higher for our students will mean greater success for them as they pursue college and careers. Asking students to think creatively, demonstrate and communicate understanding of concepts, and internalize their own learning will lead students to relate to what they are learning and become interested and committed to their own learning. Who would not want our students to have those opportunities?

The Common Core State Standards movement has been here for several years. Teachers and other educational leaders at the local, state, and national levels worked tirelessly to create a set of standards that would set benchmarks for all students as they move through our school systems and ultimately survive and thrive in college and in the global workplace.

These standards were vetted extensively, and public hearings were held before they were adopted. Once adopted, schools in Wisconsin adjusted their curriculum and instruction to meet the new standards, purchased resources that mapped to the standards, and acquired technology tools so that we would be ready for the new online tests that will start next spring. We have made tremendous progress.

To halt the implementation of the Common Core State Standards at this point would be nothing short of irresponsible. And once again, the students of Wisconsin would be short changed.

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