

Rep. Pope: Recommendations on Common Core State Standards

- Keep the Common Core Standards
 - After multiple, lengthy hearings across the state, it seems there is still a massive understanding gap regarding what role academic standards serve – this committee did not help alleviate that problem.
 - The comments regarding the content and quality of the Common Core's grade by grade recommendations disregards Wisconsin's rich history of accepting local input through school boards when selecting curriculum and classroom content. This was evidenced through excellent testimony and written support for the Common Core standards from local school districts.
- Any legislative review must respect the constitutional authority of Wisconsin's Superintendent of Schools and provide enough time to measure the actual impact of state standards
 - Wisconsin elects a State Superintendent of Schools to manage educational issues. While a review of academic standards is an acceptable and positive outcome of this committee's work, using the review to erode the Superintendent's power with respect to academic standards is not acceptable.
 - Any review timeline must take into account the amount of time needed to implement standards, train staff, and gather enough data to draw statistically sound conclusions. Somewhere in the range of 7 to 10 years would be required to achieve that goal.
- Ask the federal government to reduce the amount of standardized testing required of our public schools
 - The conclusion I was able to make from the testimony this committee received was that the amount of standardized testing being required from the federal government is negatively affecting the ability of Wisconsin's teachers to educate our students. While measuring outcomes is important, there is a tenuous balance between achieving that goal and ensuring we do not hamstring the ability of our educators to address classroom achievement. The majority of the negative comments the public made regarding the Common Core seemed to be more properly directed at testing (along with the curriculum decisions made by local districts as was discussed previously). While I am optimistic that Wisconsin's move toward using the ACT suite tests will help give better classroom feedback, I ask that this committee convey the message to federal policy makers that flexibility, when it comes to the amount of testing required, would greatly benefit Wisconsin's schools.