

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I would like to go on record as being opposed to the implementation of the Common Core Standards. I am unable to attend your public meeting. I strongly feel that the CCS are detrimental to our ability to locally control our education.

Thank you,

Lorrie Gneiser
889 Golf Vu Drive
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
920-923-6262

Dear Sir,

As a senior citizen, I resent this continued attempt of State and Federal Governments to subject citizens to Socialism ... government control of Education and individuals lives through welfare programs making them dependent on the judgements of bureaucrats. Try to find some "gazankas" and resist such legislation, unless you are an integral part of the movement in this direction. Aren't you supposed to represent the people and not dictate to them?

There is far too much mediocrity in the U.S. these days. What I have heard about Common Core is very distressing to me. Why would any parent allow such abstract teaching? In the real world $2 + 2$ MUST equal 4. To allow such a one sided (LEFT) view /definition of the way things should be and are, is criminal. There is a time and place for the abstract "artsy" way of thinking, the teachings of the basics (MATH, SCIENCE, HISTORY) are NOT it.

The State of Wisconsin (and the county) is pretty much divided into 50/50 political thought. Why do we continue to let the "lefts" viewpoint dominate the education system. Common Core is just a larger step in the "lefts" direction. If this goes through, and is allowed to be implemented, I believe that our country will never recover. We, and our children/grandchildren deserve far better!

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, DO NOT IMPLIMENT COMMON CORE. THERE IS A BETTER WAY.

Laurie Goetz

I just wanted to let you know that I am a teacher in the Fond du Lac School District. We had conferences the day that the public hearing was taking place here in Fond du Lac. I would like to officially go on record as being opposed to the common core. The 2 specialists for math and English refused to validate the common core. It seems to be another way of making teachers teach to the test and our students are being pushed to make everything hinge on a test instead of their daily growth in school. I am also opposed to the way the common core was imposed on schools across the nation. Please do not let this continue without further looking into the standards.

fayebenishek@yahoo.com

Faye Daniels

194 6th Street

Fond du Lac, WI 54935



HUDSON SCHOOL
DISTRICT

LEARNING - *the path to our global future*

To: Rep. Jeremy Thiesfeldt
From: Sandra Kovatch, Director of Learning Services
Date: October 23, 2013
Re: Common Core State Standard Hearing

My name is Sandra Kovatch and I'm the Director of Learning Services for the Hudson School District. Hudson serves approximately 5,600 students in early childhood – grade 12. Hudson sits on the western side of the state, right on the MN border. Because of our proximity to the Twin Cities, our stakeholders often look for comparisons with MN districts.

Hudson has taken a common-sense approach to implementation of Wisconsin's Common Core State Standards. Alignment to standards is just one component of our in-depth system for learning improvement process. As a district, we have immense local control in determining curricular resources and instructional methods. We view the Common Core State Standards as the floor or the foundation from which we build our curriculum and instructional method. Hudson's system for learning improvement also includes work on assessing student performance data; identifying student learning strengths and gaps; analyzing educational literature and research on current instructional trends and best practices; establishing course and grade level learning targets; designing assessment tasks; and selecting resources. Hudson believes the Common Core State standards provide a college and career focus for all Wisconsin students and they are appropriately rigorous. We have spent a great deal of time and resources the last three years to review, analyze interpret, and align the Common Core State standards with Hudson's learning expectations and strategic vision.

Hudson staff values the clarity, rigor, depth and articulation of the Common Core State Standards. The 1998 Wisconsin Model Academic Standards were written only for grades 4, 8 and 12. All Wisconsin districts had to develop benchmarks for the remaining grades which resulted in different expectations in these additional grade levels across the state. The K-12 articulation and clarity found in the Common Core State Standards are a welcome change. A foundational common scope and sequence is defined for all students, staff and districts in the state. We expect our educators to use this foundation from which to launch personalized learning and differentiation based on student need. So, if a student needs additional challenge, or requires modification of expectations, that is what we do – we focus on what is best for students. Districts across the state have local control to go above and beyond if they have the capacity. This is similar to what the state does with HS graduation standards. The state has set the bar for minimum graduation requirements but districts have local control to go above and beyond the state requirements.

Hudson believes it is in the best interest of student learning expectations, district accountability, and providing families with comparable school data to have state standards. Hudson supports the implementation of the Common Core State Standards as the foundation for rigorous learning in WI.

Good Morning Representative Thiesfeldt and Senator Farrow:

Please find attached my letter of support for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. I currently serve as the director of curriculum and learning in the School District of Menomonee Falls. I would like you to share my letter of support with other members of the committee. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I appreciate the consideration.

Gary Kiltz

Gary Kiltz, Ph.D.
Director of Curriculum and Learning
School District of Menomonee Falls

October 28, 2013

Dear Senator Farrow and Representative Thiesfeldt:

I am writing to inform you that as the Director of Curriculum and Learning in the School District of Menomonee Falls, I support the Common Core State Standards and ask that you do the same. These new standards reflect an improvement over the previous Model Academic Standards and are part of our state's education plan to help all of our children excel and be fully prepared for college and careers. Since the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in 2010, the School District of Menomonee Falls has been working diligently for three years to implement them.

Recently, the Wisconsin Legislature and others have called for reconsideration of the adoption of these standards. Consider how much time, effort and progress has already been made before derailing this major education initiative. In the School District of Menomonee Falls, teachers have taken significant time to realign assessments and lessons to the more rigorous standards. For example, Algebra is now taught at the 8th grade level with math concepts and skills being reset from 5K through 7th grade to make sure students are ready for Algebra at the 8th grade level. The District has also done more at the elementary level to balance reading across fiction and non-fiction text with focus on reading for deeper understanding and analysis. This work is necessary and better matches the expectations outlined in the College and Career Readiness Standards and the ACT assessment.

As a director of curriculum and learning, I ask that you keep in mind:

- Standards are not curriculum. They are guideposts from which curricula are developed in each school district.
- Local control is maintained through the curriculum processes that are carried out in school districts. Local curricula are guided by the more general expectations of the Common Core Curriculum Standards (CCSS). There is local control over how the CCSS is interpreted, over the resources used for instruction, and over the delivery model or type of instruction that is used. The CCSS provides a framework of high expectations from which local districts create academic programming that will work best for their community.
- The Common Core State Standards provide a higher set of expectations for our students than the previous state standards. In mathematics, the content and skills have been "moved down" in the grades. The CCSS call for about half of the content of Algebra to now be taught in eighth grade. These are higher expectations.
- We are in the third year of implementation and most school districts are embedded in the work of implementing the CCSS. To undo it and move

in another direction would waste time and contribute to a loss of focus while an alternative is being developed.

Our district continues to work to provide support for educators, students, parents, and others across the state to ensure they are prepared for necessary changes in curriculum, instruction and assessments. We want to serve as a resource for you as you consider Wisconsin's approach to implementation of the new standards. Please visit www.commoncore.dpi.wi.gov to find useful information on the CCSS, or contact me to talk about the work in the School District of Menomonee Falls. Feel free to reach out with any questions you may have as we move forward in the implementation process.

Sincerely,

Gary Kiltz, Ph.D.
Director of Curriculum and Learning
School District of Menomonee Falls

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt:

As a former member of Governor Walker's Read to Lead Task Force, I strongly recommend approval of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). I believe it is extremely important to have consistent instruction throughout all schools. While the CCSS don't tell teachers how to teach, they do tell what to teach in reading/language arts and math at each grade level. They will guide districts in what staff development will be necessary for their teachers to teach to those standards.

Please help all Wisconsin schools do better by endorsing the CCSS.

Best wishes in your deliberations,

Marcia Henry, Ph.D.
Professor Emerita, San Jose State University
Past President, The International Dyslexia Association

The Honorable Senator Gudex, Rep. Thiesfeldt & Sen. Farrow:

After attending the hearing in FdL for the Common Core Standards here in Wisconsin, I urge you to please do whatever possible to release our state from compliance with those rigid and warped requirements. They are radical political efforts to impose federal control of our education system. It is much better to keep education under our state control, and local control to decide what is best for our children's. As Dr. Stotsky stated, it will cost to get out, but it will cost more to stay in it. We should also take her advice for Wisconsin to get a panel of experienced educators to set our own standards.

Respectfully,

Jeanette Rinke

FdL,

jarinke@charter.net

To Members of Select Committee listening to all of the Common Core testimony,

I do hope someone will ask DPI & the administrators and superintendents who is paying for their travel expenses. How many from your department/district are with you today. How many of you took a vacation day to be here. (Please, avoid yes/no questions. I've learned they are easier to answer not quite truthfully.) As a taxpayer, I would like to know what it is costing us for Common Core to bring all of their supporters to testify. I resent the sneering comments to experts who understand CCSS at a deeper level than most. And I know the experts against CCSS have not been paid, only their expenses.

Thank you for the many thoughtful questions I have heard as I attended Fond du Lac & listened to Madison & Eau Claire hearings.

Ruth Elmer

Dear Representative Thiesfelt and Senator Farrow:

The following letter came to my attention today, from Senator Lehman and Representative Pope. They allege that a right wing extremist group paid to bring in several of the experts that have spoken out against Common Core in recent state hearings. **Yes, that's right - I am a Mom from the Midwest, concerned about my children's education - I certainly fit the bill of being a right wing extremist.** May I add that to my resume?

<http://wispolitics.com/1006/131025Common.pdf>

Living in Appleton, and having recently become acquainted with Common Core, I see many many things associated with Common Core that are concerning. Rather than address those items here, I wanted to share that the groundswell against Common Core has been building. Concerned parents from all across the political spectrum do not like the implications of Common Core. Realizing that there was the possibility to mobilize and bring experts to the table that could eloquently explain why Common Core is bad for Wisconsin, many of us jumped at the opportunity to put some money in that hat. In this case, the hat was actually on the internet (via www.fpeusa.org), and I was happy to contribute some money to cover the travel costs of the experts that have been brought in. None of the speakers were paid, and some took time off their 'regular job' to visit Wisconsin. They simply asked that their travel and lodging be covered.

I had to google the John Birch Society and the American Opinion Foundation, to understand what they represent. I certainly am not a member of either. I am not a political activist, and resent being addressed as a "right wing extremist". I am just a Mom that wants the best for her children, and hope that my \$40 made a difference in the cause to getting Common Core removed from Wisconsin. I am not "the fringe"; I am a taxpayer in Wisconsin. I know there were many like me that contributed to this cause, and not because we are politically motivated. We contributed because we are motivated by our children, and we believe they deserve the very best.

Out of curiosity, do you know who will be paying for the expert witness that the DPI will be bringing in, Mr. Mike Petrilli? Did those in support of Common Core similarly pass a hat, or will the taxpayers be paying for Mr. Petrilli's travel and accommodations? Thanks for looking into this!

Sincerely,

Wendy Mueller

Wendy Mueller

4900 N. Redcrested Ct.
Appleton, WI 54913

M: +1 920 427 2917

Dear Assemblymen Knudson, Thiesfeldt, Schraa, Larson, Priedmore, Steineke and Senators Farrow, and Darling,

I received your signed letter seeking my input on the CCSS. My response is below.

As you know, since 2010, 45 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards. You also know that each state made its own local decision to adopt the CCSS after there were multiple opportunities to review drafts and voice feedback. The process of moving toward higher and clearer standards began in 2007 in partnership with many stakeholders including the business community, higher education and PK-12 public schools. Contrary to some grossly misinformed individuals, the Common Core State Standards were not forced upon states by the federal government. Quite the contrary. The CCSS were conceived when in 2010, when the National Governor's Association and the Council of State School Officers saw an opportunity to clearly define the knowledge and skills that would prepare students for the 21st century workplace by making them college and career ready through a set of consistent and rigorous educational standards. Responses to your questions are below:

1. Prior to 2010 our District used the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. I am sure that your committee's in-depth study of academic standards has resulted in it already having a copy of this set of standards, so a copy is not provided with this correspondence. Of course they can be found on the WI DPI website as well.
2. The state of Wisconsin, through the constitutional authority provided to the State Superintendent of Schools, adopted the Common Core State Standards in 2010. Our District has adopted the CCSS. The premise of your question, "Has your district augmented those standards in any way?" is in question, in that standards are not in and of themselves what is taught to students. All districts, including ours, use district specific curriculums to ensure that all academic standards are addressed. If that is what the legislative committee is referring to when it asks about "...augmented those standards in any way?" then yes. The CCSS are more rigorous and will lead to students being more college and career ready post high school than they were in the past. It should be noted that WI has been among the national leaders in high school graduation rate and ACT scores. The CCSS will certainly maintain and will likely improve this distinction.
3. Our District has spent several thousand dollars in the purchase of curriculum mapping software which allowed our teachers to in some cases match existing curriculum and in others create new curriculum material aligned to the CCSS. We also spent and continue to spend significant time and money on professional development surrounding the implementation of the CCSS. It should also be noted, as you are aware, that the new state assessment system (Smarter Balanced Assessment) will be based on CCSS and will be implemented in the 2014-2015 school year.
4. Of course I would support reviewing our state's academic standards over time. It only makes sense to do so as the needs of students and society change over time.

It is ironic that members of the state legislature are now questioning WI's implementation of the CCSS our own state's Governor Walker highlighted the CCSS and Wisconsin's leadership in being one of the first to adopt CCSS as part of his reading reform effort, noting it in *The Wisconsin Read to Lead Task*

Force Report. And though it is with enthusiasm and appreciation that this opportunity for feedback is received, one does wonder why it is coming now, after most of the heavy lifting in getting the CCSS implemented is done and why it did not come back in 2010, 2011 or even 2012.

As an educational professional, I have heard, read and seen from parents, stakeholders and individual legislators all sorts of opinions on the CCSS. I would value each of your thoughts on the following:

1. Why are you seeking input on the CCSS now, in 2013, rather than prior to 2010 when it was adopted by the state and there were ample opportunities for questions at that time?
2. What reasons, groups or individuals prompted your current interest in the CCSS?
3. What are your personal thoughts on the rigor of the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards? On what do you base your thoughts?
4. What are your personal thoughts on the CCSS in terms of rigor? On what do you base your thoughts?

I thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback on the CCSS. Thank you in advance to Assemblymen Knudson, Thiesfeldt, Schraa, Larson, Priedmore, Steineke and Senators Farrow, and Darling for your thoughts on my questions. I hope to hear from you soon.

Respectfully,

Patrick Mans
Superintendent
School District of Crivitz
400 South Avenue
Crivitz, WI 54114
Phone: (715)854-2721 ext 315

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt,

My wife and I were not able to make the hearing in Eau Claire. These are our concerns.

1. The Mathematics and Grammar professionals walked out of the Common Core meetings because of the dumbing down and propaganda in the curriculum.
2. Once the Federal government gets any hold into a state then they will use it to control that state. The corporate skin on this is thin, it is about federally controlling all state's curriculums and thus what kids think. It is very liberal and just one more means to expand the Democrat party.
3. If Wisconsin wants to improve its standards we can do it without Common Core.

Please, stop this at any and every level you can. It is bad for Wisconsin.

Duane and Jackie Shoebridge
1921 Queen Street
Bloomer WI 54724

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for holding the public hearings on Common Core. I am unable to attend the public hearing in Wausau tomorrow, but wanted to submit the following making the connection between common core and the Smarter Balanced Consortium; and also with the 2012 changes in FERPA regulations, which will only allow for more disclosures of student data to be obtained by the federal government. I am a strong opponent of common core and do believe, as does Governor Walker, that Wisconsin can do better!

I apologize for this email being so extensive, but did try to expound upon important aspects of each link.

Respectfully Submitted,
Grace Mueller
Kewaskum School District
Board Member
262-483-9193

The below informational links should clarify that student data will be accessible to the federal government through the Smarter Balanced Consortium of which the State of Wisconsin is a Governing State (see link below, State of Wisconsin Race to the Top Application - page 59, last sentence.)

1. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/phase2-applications/wisconsin.pdf>

Below is the link to the Cooperative Agreement Between the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and the SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT CONSORTIUM and the STATE OF WASHINGTON (fiscal agent) downloaded from the Cooperative Agreements from the Race to the Top Assessment Program Awards page.

2. <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment/sbac-cooperative-agreement.pdf>

PLEASE NOTE:

"Item 5 on page 3 states:

5) Comply with, and where applicable coordinate with the ED staff to fulfill, the program requirements established in the RTTA Notice Inviting Applications and the conditions on the grant award, as well as to this agreement, including, but not limited to working with the Department to develop a strategy to make student-level data that results from the assessment system available on an ongoing basis for research, including for prospective linking, validity, and program improvement studies; subject to applicable privacy laws.

This establishes that the agreement is referring to student-level (individual) data when it mentions data. The document says nothing about aggregate data. **Item 5(b) on page**

11 reads:

(b) Producing all student-level data in a manner consistent with an industry-recognized

open-licensed interoperability standard that is approved by the Department during the grant period;

Item 6 on page 10 reads:

6) The Grantee must provide timely and complete access to any and all data collected at the State level to ED or its designated program monitors, technical assistance providers, or researcher partners, and to GAO, and the auditors conducting the audit required by 34 CFR section 80.26.

If asked, your state officials may deny the Common Core requires the state to share student data with the federal government. While they may not be lying to you they aren't being entirely honest as a result of semantics. Instead of the state sharing data it is the consortia providing access. The state isn't required to share student-level data through the Common Core. The consortia are required to "provide timely and complete access to any and all data collected at the state level" to the federal government. So even the consortia are able to deny they are sharing student data with the federal government. They aren't sharing in the sense of giving, rather they are providing access so the federal government can reach in and take whatever data they want whenever they want.

This is where people get the idea the Common Core requires the state to share student data with the federal government. It really is the federal government requiring the assessment consortia to provide complete access to student-level data."

The above informational highlights pertaining to link #2 above were obtained from:

<http://truthinamericaneducation.com/uncategorized/federal-government-to-have-access-to-your-childs-data-via-common-core-assessments/>

Below is the link regarding new FERPA regulations that were effective January 3, 2012. "U.S. Department of Education Amends its FERPA Regulations to allowing for greater disclosures of personal and directory student identifying information and regulate student IDs and e-mail addresses, among other issues".

3. <http://www.natlawreview.com/article/us-department-education-amends-its-ferpa-regulations-to-allow-certain-additional-student-dis>

Dear Senator Farrow and Representative Thiesfeldt,
Attached please find written testimony for the Select Committee on the Common Core Standards.
Unfortunately my travel and speaking schedules will not allow me to be present at the hearings on
October 30. Please accept these written comments as my testimony. Do not hesitate to contact me for
additional information or comments.

Respectfully,
Christopher H. Tienken, Ed.D.

Christopher H. Tienken, Ed.D.

Visit me @: www.christienken.com

732.233.2738

Editor, AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice

Editor, Kappa Delta Pi Record

Seton Hall University

College of Education and Human Services

Department of Education Leadership, Management, and Policy

Select Committee on The Common Core State Standards
Written Testimony
October 30, 2013

Submitted by Christopher H. Tienken, Ed.D.

Good afternoon Senator Farrow, Representative Thiesfeldt and ladies and gentlemen of the Select Committee on the Common Core State Standards. I am Dr. Christopher H. Tienken, from Seton Hall University in New Jersey, where I am a professor of education leadership, management, and policy and teach courses at the masters and doctoral levels. I specialize in curriculum and assessment policy and practices. I have been actively researching and writing about the Common Core since 2009. My work on the Core has been widely circulated around the nation, in Europe, and the English speaking countries in the South Pacific. I've held Visiting Scholar status at the Universities of Roma Tre and Catania in Italy where I lecture on curriculum and assessment policy. I am frequent contributor on the Common Core to national journals, newspapers, research conferences, town hall meetings and other forums. My research was recognized by the National Staff Development Council as their Best Research Award recipient and as the recipient of the Truman Kelley Award for Outstanding Scholarship by the International Honor Society for Education, Kappa Delta Pi. I have public school experience as a former Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, a Middle School Principal, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary School Assistant Principal, and Elementary School Teacher. I also have two young girls who are now experiencing the Common Core in their local public school. I appreciate your interest in the important topic of the Common Core and the standardization of education for our public school students. In my brief comments today I hope to provide useful information regarding four reasons that Wisconsin should step away from the Common Core and restore local decision making of curriculum and assessment.

As we are all aware, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative continues to move forward. As of October 2013, 45 states and multiple territories made the CCSS the legal law of their land in terms of the mathematics and language arts curricula used in their public schools. Some states, like my home of New Jersey signed on even before the final drafts were released. Yet the evidence presented by the developers and vendors of the Core, the National Governors Association (NGA) and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), for the need to adopt a common curriculum and the potential efficacy of that curriculum seems lacking compared to the independent reviews and the available research on the topic that suggest the CCSS are misguided.

Logic requires we ask some basic questions like: How can one curriculum in mathematics and language arts prepare all children to attend one of the over 4,400 colleges and universities or pursue the tens of thousands of careers, some of which have not even been invented yet? Of course one curriculum cannot prepare children for all colleges and careers and there are many reasons why. Today I will raise just four issues with the Common Core in hopes that you will pause and perhaps reflect

if this initiative is in fact the best that Wisconsin can do for its children.

First, the quality of the standards has not been validated empirically and no mechanism has been created to monitor the intended and unintended consequences they will have on the education system and children (Mathis, 2010). In fact, as colleagues and I presented in many articles and speeches on the topic since 2009, the major arguments made by the vendors and marketers of the Core about the need for its adoption collapse under a review of the empirical literature: (a) America's children are lagging behind international peers in terms of academic achievement, and (b) the economic vibrancy and future of the United States relies upon American students outranking their global peers on international tests of academic achievement because of the mythical relationship between ranks on those tests and a country's economic competitiveness.

It is important to note that none of the international tests that the vendors of the Core cite, such as PISA and TIMSS, were developed to (a) measure the overall quality of a country's education system, or (b) predict economic competitiveness. Basing decisions to adopt a standardized curriculum on the results from those tests is scientifically reckless. For example, the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2010), the developer of PISA, cautioned policy makers not to put too much credence in the results:

If a country's scale scores in reading, scientific or mathematical literacy are significantly higher than those in another country, it cannot automatically be inferred that the schools or particular parts of the education system in the first country are more effective than those in the second. (OECD 2010, p.171)

The OECD acknowledges the important role that the environment in which a child grows up and the experiences he has outside of school contribute to education output and influence the results on the PISA:

However, one can legitimately conclude that the cumulative impact of learning experiences in the first country, starting in early childhood and up to the age of 15 and embracing experiences both in school and at home, have resulted in higher outcomes in the literacy domains that PISA measures. (OECD 2010, p.171)

The OECD reports a fairly strong correlation of approximately .50, between childhood poverty and PISA scores. In general, the higher the childhood poverty rate, the lower the PISA score. Tirozzi (as cited in Riddle 2010) demonstrated previously with the results from the PISA 2009 tests that when we compare student scores according to similar levels of poverty, the U.S. ranks first in the world on all sections of the PISA. Hardly lagging.

The OECD authors also caution policy makers that alignment between a country's curriculum and the PISA can be another factor in the differences in achievement due to the way that various countries define "age 15" for their testing cohorts. Countries define "15" differently and those variations can result in students being in different

grade levels at age 15 during the time of the test and receiving different curricula. Furthermore, the OECD warns that differences in achievement on the PISA could actually decrease or evaporate later in schooling as the differences between countries' curricula decrease and topics converge.

Depending on countries' policies on school entry, selection and promotion, these students (in the age cohort 15 yrs 3 months to 16 yrs 2 months) may be distributed over a narrower or wider range of grades across different education systems, tracks or streams. It is important to consider these differences when comparing PISA results across countries, as observed differences between students at age 15 may no longer appear as students' educational converge later on. (OECD, 2010, p. 171)

Researchers at the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement [IEA] who administer the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study, known as TIMSS, provided policy makers a similar warning about curricular misalignment between the TIMSS mathematics test and countries' curricula as a cause for differences in achievement:

Although the assessments were developed to represent an agreed-upon framework and were intended to have as much in common across countries as possible, it was unavoidable that the match between the TIMSS 2011 assessment (or test) and the mathematics curriculum would not be the same in all countries. (IEA, 2012b, p. 466)

33% of the questions on the Grade 8 mathematics TIMSS required algebra and functions. Some Grade 8 students in the US and other countries do not learn that content until Grades 9 or 10. (IEA, 2012a, p. 427)

Results from study after study demonstrated that the outcomes from international tests are not good indicators of education quality or student academic achievement. They certainly can't prescribe that children in Oshkosh should be made to master the same exact content at the same level of difficulty, in the same format, on the same day or week as a child in Green Bay throughout their entire K-12 careers. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that removing the majority of curricular decision making away from parents and teachers, and placing it into the hands of corporations and special interests masquerading as non-profits will improve student learning or rankings on international tests (Zhao, 2012b). The vendors of the Core can't even tell us which standards were taken from which countries, and if the sequence they set the standards has any evidence to support it.

But what about the influence of poverty on the TIMSS test results? The secondary TIMSS sample, called the *Benchmarking Participants*, includes results from several states, including Massachusetts, Florida, and California. I used the TIMSS 2011 scores from Massachusetts (MA) as a proxy for the scores from a less impoverished "U.S." national sample to model lower levels of child poverty on that test and found similar results to those from Tirozzi on the PISA: Low poverty U.S. students top the world (Tienken, 2013b; 2013c).

According to The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the 2011 child poverty rate in MA was 15% whereas the rate for the U.S. was approximately 23%, the second highest in the industrialized world. Although 15% poverty is higher than many countries in the TIMSS sample (e.g. Japan, Finland, Germany, Denmark, Norway) it does provide a method to look at the influence of poverty on TIMSS results and gives insight as to how U.S. students might score if less of them lived in poverty.

Grade 8 students in MA participated in the science and mathematics portions. In science, the MA students achieved a scale score of 567, second only to Singapore at 590 and ahead of such participants as Chinese Taipei, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Finland. A decrease in the poverty rate by 8 percentage points in the U.S. (23% U.S. average—15% MA average) increases the scale score by 41 points and propels the U.S. to 2nd place in the world on TIMSS 2011 Grade 8 Science (Tienken, 2013b).

In mathematics, the MA students achieved a scale score of 561 compared to the U.S. average of 509: a difference of 52 scale score points. The difference propels the U.S. students into 5th place and on par with Japan. Poverty matters in the U.S. in terms of scale scores on the TIMSS and it is poverty that creates a lag, not locally, democratically developed curricula. Clearly the evidence from international testing does not support the need for the Core.

The second issue I would like to raise is that the language arts and mathematics curriculum sequences embedded in the Core Standards are nothing more than rehashed versions of the recommendations from the Committee of Ten in 1893 and the Committee of 15 in 1893; hardly 21st century innovations. The standards do little to promote global literacy through cultural collaboration, strategizing, innovation, and cooperation: skills vitally important not only to “compete” but to synergize globally. The 21st century will be less about direct competition and more about leveraging relationships across the global to innovate and create. The Standards do not stress socially conscious problem-solving or strategizing. They are inert, sterile, globally static, and in the end, call for students to produce a predetermined correct answer. This type of curriculum is in stark contrast to what the United States Council on Competitiveness called for:

At the beginning of the 21st century, America stands at the dawn of a conceptual economy in which insight, imagination and ingenuity determine competitive advantage and value creation. To succeed in this hyper-competitive, fast-paced global economy, we cannot, nor should we want to, compete on low wages, commodity products, standard services, and routine science and technology development. As other nations build sophisticated technical capabilities, excellence in science and technology alone will not ensure success. (p. 10)

Furthermore, the results from the *2010 Global Chief Executive Study* conducted by the IBM Corporation made several important recommendations that call into question the use of 19th century curriculum standards to address 21st century

issues. After analyzing data from interviews with 1,500 of the world's CEO's the authors of the report stated that to remain competitive in the global economies CEO's and their employees must:

- (a) use creative leadership strategies;
- (b) collaborate and cooperate globally amongst themselves and with their customer bases;
- (c) differentiate their responses, products, and services to build operating dexterity (p.51); and
- (d) be able to use complexity to a strategic advantage.

The vendors of the CCSS have a problem: They have no evidence that demonstrates the validity of the standards as a vehicle to build 21st century skills nor as a means to achieve the things the business leaders say will be needed to operate in a diverse global environment. The CCSS are stuck in a time warp. A curricular time machine, if you will, set to 1895 (Tienken, 2011).

Third, the evidence provided by the vendors of the Core, for the efficacy of the Core, calls into question the quality of the standards. The official website for the CCSS claims to have the best evidence available. The site's authors allege that the standards are evidence-based and lists two homegrown documents to prove it: *Myths vs Facts* (NGA, 2010) and the *Joint International Benchmarking Report* (NGA, 2008). The *Myths* document presents claims that the standards have "made use of a large and growing body of knowledge" (p. 3).

In the scientific world knowledge derives in part from carefully controlled and independently conducted scientific experiments and observations. Therefore, one would expect to find references to high quality empirical research to support the standards. When I reviewed that "large and growing body of knowledge" offered by the NGA, I found that it was not large, and in fact built mostly on one report, *Benchmarking for Success*, created by the NGA and the CCSSO, the same groups that created these standards; Not exactly the independent research I had hoped to find.

The *Benchmarking* report contains over 135 endnotes, some of which are repetitive references. Only four of the cited pieces of evidence could be considered empirical studies related directly to the topic of national standards and student achievement and the results of those four studies do not confirm that the U.S. needs national standards, one path to college and careers, or that the intended results from such a centralized system will be demonstrably better than a locally controlled system. The remaining citations from the report were newspaper stories, armchair magazine articles, op-ed pieces, book chapters, notes from telephone interviews, and several tangential studies (Tienken, 2011).

Many of the citations were linked to a small group of standardization advocates and did not represent the larger body of classical or recent empirical thought on the topic. The *Joint International Benchmarking Report*, the primary source of evidence provided by the NGA and CCSSO, draws most of its conclusions from one report, *The*

Role of Cognitive Skills in Economic Development (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2008). The use of that report is troubling because it has several fatal flaws in its logic and methodology.

My fourth and final point is that the claim that the CCSS are necessary due to U.S. students causing a loss of economic competitive advantage is patently false. The U.S. is the world leader in creativity and innovation. The idea that the CCSS will lead to more creativity and innovation is patently false. Standardizing creativity is an oxymoron. By its nature, creativity is developed over a long period of time, and the outcomes of creativity are brought about by diverse and completely unstandardized experiences. By definition, creative outputs are unique. In many ways, creativity can be partly in the eye of the beholder (Zhao, 2012b). That is one reason it is difficult to teach creativity aimed at a standard outcome. Likewise, a country cannot standardize itself into producing more creative citizens. Standardized is inherently uncreative. However, opportunities to engage in experiences and use behaviors and skills that relate to creativity can be offered to students through problem-based, project-based, and activity-based curricula developed locally. These types of curricula, by design, require students to develop nonstandard solutions to unstructured problems. Visualize the opposite of the one-size-fits-all monitoring system set up through the Common Core State Standards and national standardized testing and you would be moving your thinking in the right direction (Tienken, 2013a; 2013b).

We need to jettison the idea that all students must know the same set of narrow content and skills, at the same level of difficulty, and demonstrate that knowledge in exactly the same manner beyond basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills commonly used in Grades 6 or 7. Only then can we embrace the idea of individual interests and passion, and begin to imagine a creative curriculum with multiple pathways through high school and to college and careers (Zhao, 2012a).

There exist multiple indices and indicators of creativity and the output of our creative, non-standardized efforts. One indicator is the Global Creativity Index, produced by the Martin Prosperity Institute (2011). So how do countries rank in terms of global creativity? The United States ranked second behind Sweden, and ahead of countries like Finland, Denmark, Australia, Norway, Japan, Germany, and Singapore. China ranked 58th. In economic terms, what can creativity look like? One outgrowth can be entrepreneurship.

According to the Global Entrepreneurship and Development Index (Acs & Szerb, 2010), the United States ranked third on the overall Global Entrepreneurship Index, behind Denmark and Canada and ahead of countries like Japan, China, Singapore, and Finland. The United States ranked sixth on the index of Entrepreneurial Attitudes, behind countries such as New Zealand, Canada, Australia, and Sweden. The United States ranked ahead of Finland, Norway, Germany, Japan, and Singapore. China ranked in the lower third of the world. The United States ranked first on the Entrepreneurial Aspirations Index and sixth in the world on turning those

aspirations into reality (i.e., Entrepreneurial Activities Index), once again ahead of Japan, Germany, Singapore, and Finland. Denmark was first and China was near the bottom of the world rankings.

Innovation is also one possible outcome of creativity. The Global Innovation Index ranked the United States fifth behind Switzerland, Sweden, United Kingdom, and Netherlands (Dutta & Lanvin, 2013). China ranked 35th. Some outcomes of innovation include utility patents and Nobel Prizes. According to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (2012), the United States was granted 121,026 utility patents in 2012. Utility patents are “issued for the invention of a new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or a new and useful improvement thereof” (U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, 2013). The 195 countries of the world outside the United States combined for 132,129 utility patents, only 11,103 more than the United States alone; Japan had the second most patents approved in 2012 with 50,677, almost 40% of the rest of the world’s output.

Nobel Prizes also can be used as a related indicator of creativity and innovation. Since 1901, the Nobel Committee has issued 915 prizes in the areas of Chemistry, Economics, Literature, Medicine, Peace, and Physics. Nobel Laureates born in the United States represented the most of any country, with 262. The next most awarded country of origin, with 82, is the United Kingdom, followed by what is now Germany with 70. Laureates born in India have been awarded 9 prizes and China 11. In the specific area of Nobel Prizes in the Sciences, the United States ranked first again with 191 U.S.-born Laureates, followed by the United Kingdom with 66 and Germany with 60 (Nobelprize.org, 2013).

The number of scientific papers published is another leading indicator of creativity, albeit scientific creativity, and innovation. U.S. scientists, ranking first in the world, published 3,049,662 scientific papers in 2011 (Thomson Reuters, 2011). Chinese scientists published 836,255 papers, and scientists from Germany and Japan published approximately 784,316 and 771,548 papers, respectively. Keep in mind that China has a population almost 5x greater than that of the U.S. yet the U.S. put out almost 4x as many scientific papers. Publication numbers alone, however, do not give readers insight to the quality of those papers (Tienken, 2013a).

One hallmark of quality for scientific publications is how many times they are cited. Citations provide an indicator of the level of acceptance for scientific ideas and also of how well those ideas have been vetted and determined to be worth pursuing. Papers from U.S. scientists garnered 48,862,100 citations. The country with the next closest number of citations was Germany with 10,518,133. Papers from Chinese scientists gathered 5,191,358 citations (Tienken, 2013a).

These accomplishments and numerous others, too many to list, were not the result of the standardized system brought on by No Child Left Behind and now Common Core and national testing. These accomplishments were a result of the non-standardized, locally controlled, public education system that existed before 2002.

Do the state and federal governments have a role they can play, yes, but that role should not be that of a centralizer, homogenizer, and standardizer at the classroom level that extinguishes creativity and innovation in favor of a system built on imitation and regurgitation.

I appreciate your time and commitment on this issue. Please feel free to contact me at anytime if I can be of further assistance. A listing of works related to the citations and works consulted for this testimony is provided at the end of this testimony.

Thank you,

Christopher H. Tienken, Ed.D.
www.christienken.com
Christopher.tienken@shu.edu

Note: Portions of this testimony were influenced by or adapted from some of my previous works, the most influential of which were *The Common Core State Standards: An Example of Data-less Decision Making* and *The School Reform Landscape: Fraud, Myth, and Lies*, both of which can be found at www.christienken.com.

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Representative Thiesfeldt,

As residents of Wisconsin, my husband and I would like you to know that we would strongly encourage you to decide to vote against proceeding with the Common Core Curriculum Standards. We believe that Common Core will not help the future of Wisconsin. We believe that with a little work, Wisconsin can come up with a much better set of standards of their own.

Sincerely,
Terry & Sarah Rushing
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

I do NOT want european socialist style education in Wisconsin... I do NOT want Wisconsin children to be just another number in a long line of cookie cutter education... Do whatever it takes to PREVENT Common Core taking hold in Wisconsin education...

eagle_eye_60@yahoo.com

Scott Phillips

3000 so. 84th st.

West Allis Wisconsin 53227

Please STOP the illegal federal takeover of education that is Common Core! The standards are NOT rigorous or internationally bench marked! We want LOCAL control.

pmealins@sbcglobal.net

Tricia Mealins

829 S. 101 Street

West Allis, WI 53214

Dear Representative Thiesfeldt,

I urge you to reject Common Core for Wisconsin. In spite of what Tony Evers, the DPI and all the superintendents and the people beholden to the DPI say, Common Core is not right for Wisconsin.

- Common Core is a surreptitious, indirect and direct takeover of education in Wisconsin.
- Common Core standards resurrect failed education methods of the past.
- Common Core standards decrease emphasis on content in favor of changing attitudes and behavior—social engineering.
- Common Core standards are not as rigorous as FREELY available standards from Massachusetts (before Massachusetts accepted Common Core).
- Common Core standards cannot be changed to better fit the students of Wisconsin.

That's not all. I urge you to reject the Smarter Balanced Assessments and ACT tests aligned with Common Core, or Common Core will live on.

Further, I urge you to reject the collection and transmission of student and family data to the federal government, no matter how seemingly private it may be. We know limitations are eventually removed.

Sincerely,

Monte Schmiede

707 E Kilbourn Ave

West Bend, WI 53095

Sirs:

I am unable to attend the hearing today. I wanted to communicate to you my feelings about Common Core. The meetings I have attended and the reading I've done have caused me to be concerned about this program in two areas. First, the methodology of teaching, especially in math, is cumbersome. Second, the intrusive nature of the proposed information gathering seems to me to go beyond what is reasonable in an educational setting. I would prefer that Common Core not be the law of the land in Wisconsin.

Thank you,

Stephen Hathway, MD
Green Bay, WI
920-336-3023

Dear Common Core committee,

My wife and I will not be able to attend the meeting, but wanted to express to you our sincerest and heartfelt concerns over the destructiveness, inefficiencies, and in effectiveness of Common Core. Please, please vote NO on ANY form of Common Core in the great state of Wisconsin.

God bless,
Stephen and Judy Fifrick
3411 Lost Dauphin Rd
De Pere, WI 54115

I do not want nor support federal govt controlled education. We need to remove, CC standards, curriculum and tests of this low standard one size fits all.. CC is taking control from the parents and putting it in the hands of federal bureaucrats. back to basics skills and acquiring knowledge and mastering and solving problems according to grade level is what is needed. Local control is immediate. Most urgent that we lose this CC and go back to TIMSS. Works in Mass.. Thank you.

mbstraub@yahoo.com

Beth Straub

17901 W. Westview La

New Berlin WI. 53146

Dear Wisconsin Common Core State Standards Review Committee Chairs and Members,
I am unable to attend the hearing today in Wausau, but I would like to express my support for maintaining the Wisconsin Common Core State Standards for ELA and Math and continuing to produce standards for other subjects using the same model. As an educator of elementary and middle school students, I believe strongly in rigorous, consistent academic standards to support the college and career readiness of students and to provide a baseline for what a high school graduate in Wisconsin will know. Having a clear set of shared goals that all schools in the state are working towards provides a framework that supports education in Wisconsin regardless of transfers within the state. Having a framework supported by 45 other states also ensures that 90% of the time, if a family moves from one state to another, the grade level academic standards will be consistent so that the student is ready to 'pick up where s/he left off' from the previous school.

Wisconsin chose to participate in the CCSS in 2010 after a three year review process involving education stakeholders from the business community, higher education professionals and educators within the PreK-12 system to examine Wisconsin standards for college and career readiness. The state legislature passed and Governor Walker signed into budget the allocations for new CCSS-aligned assessments, slated to begin in 2014-15. It is dismaying to see that the investments made by so many over the last six years may be all lost, and students, teachers, parents, administrators, future employers and college entrance boards will all suffer the consequences.

Maintaining and continuing the CCSS model in Wisconsin is the right thing to do. I urge all committee members to support the Wisconsin CCSS. Please ensure that this feedback is posted on all appropriate web pages maintained by the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this feedback.

Sincerely,

Amy Workman
505 8th St
Baraboo, WI 53913

Representative Thiesfeldt,

My name is Doug Burge and I am the President of the Wisconsin Mathematics Council. I would like to request that you accept the attached statement as a testimony on behalf of the Wisconsin Mathematics Council in favor of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

Thank you,

Doug Burge
President
Wisconsin Mathematics Council

Wisconsin Mathematics Council Statement in Support of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

The Wisconsin Mathematics Council (WMC) stands united with every major organization of mathematics and mathematics education at the national level in support of the Common Core Standards for Mathematics.

As a statewide organization, our membership includes professionals serving as educators, building principals, curriculum directors, and mathematicians spanning grades PK – 16. Our mission is to lead in the development and promotion of quality mathematics education that enhances learning for all educators and their students. We have been working hard over the past three years to lead teachers forward with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM), and we believe this work aligns perfectly with our longstanding vision to provide leadership, services, and resources in support of quality mathematics education in Wisconsin.

The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics represent the highest academic bar we have ever set for students in Wisconsin. We believe they are good for the children of Wisconsin for many reasons; here are just a few:

- They provide more consistent and clear expectations for all students and teachers.
- They identify grade-level specific expectations in grades K – 8 to minimize gaps in learning when students move to a different grade level or school.
- They identify four or five critical areas of study at each grade level in grades K-8 to provide focus for student learning.
- They provide acceleration options to meet the needs of higher-achieving students.
- They increase productive dialogue between districts about how to best support students.
- They empower local districts to focus resources on how to best teach students, not what to teach students.
- They equip students with the skills to use the mathematics in meaningful ways.

A major focus of the Wisconsin Mathematics Council since the adoption of the standards in 2010 has been to assist teachers from all regions of the state with the transition to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. In doing so, we have observed many advantages that the CCSSM bring to the teachers and students in Wisconsin. We have witnessed a definite increase in the productive dialogue between teachers and districts, which has led to invigorating discussions about how to best teach mathematics to children. We are clearly on a path to improvement with these standards and we must stay the course.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the benefits the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics have to offer all children in Wisconsin.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug Burge
President
Wisconsin Mathematics Council

| | |
|------------|--|
| Comments | I Oppose common Core |
| Email | dsmjmayer@charter.net |
| Name | Jill Mayer |
| Address | 210 Elm ST |
| City_state | Eden, WI 53019 |

| | |
|------------|--|
| Comments | OPPOSE!!! |
| Email | moulmom@yahoo.com |
| Name | Mary Moul |
| Address | N7641 Lakeshore Drive |
| City_state | Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54937 |

I stand firmly OPPOSED to Common Core.
Do not let this into our state.

bseif@charter.net

Beth Seif

231 Bischoff St

Fond du Lac WI 54935

Please do all possible to stop the implementation of Common Core Standards in Wisconsin. These are poor standards and geared toward social engineering not education improvement

jarinke@charter.net

Jeanette Rinke

21 Riverside Court

Fond du Lac, WI 54935-4733

I strongly oppose Common Core. Most of its so-called standards are abstract in the extreme. Who will interpret them? Answer: the federal government through its contractors who are writing the tests for them. The tests will dictate what will be taught under these standards. Anyone who, knowing this, supports the CC standards without knowing what's on the tests is willfully negligent.

Further, this is back-door federal usurpation of a power--regulation of local education--not granted to the federal government by our Constitution. Speaking of the Constitution, some of the CC standards are not abstract. For example, they call for English instruction to rely upon at least 50% informational texts. They particularly advocate use of foundational documents, e.g. our Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. These are open doors to the inculcation of liberal political ideology.

One horror story: a 6th grade class that was asked to decide which parts of the Bill of Rights to repeal and which to amend without any prior instruction on the theory and thought behind the Bill of Rights.

Finally, why was CC so secretly introduced? The answer can't be good.

paulr@lawfdl.com

Paul W. Rosenfeldt

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To whom it may concern:

First, thank you for your honest consideration of my view point as it concerns to Common Core and SBTC tests. I am writing mainly on behalf of my children, ages 3,5, and 7, as they are the recipients of this legislation and those being affected most by the changes currently going on with regard to curriculum and testing. It is their generation whom will be most affected by these changes that have already been put into movement, but also their generation who is developmentally unable to express the challenges this new curriculum and testing will pose for them.

First, a little stage setting: two of my three children attend public school in the town we live. My third child attends an arts-based preschool where abstract thinking is valued and developed. Our local public school is one of the top ranked schools in WI. My husband and I are both graduates with honors' from the University of Notre Dame, my husband also holding a degree from the University of Chicago. We both have been in managing positions within the field of consumer goods businesses, and have found it a struggle to find individuals to fill positions who are highly capable in written communication as well as basic math and finance as it pertains to a business role. To this point, we absolutely agree changes need to be made. We also deal daily with the complaints of our second grader and kindergartener that school is BORING and they cite the reason for this as "all we get to do all day are worksheets". I understand this is likely an overstatement on their part, but already at the young age of 5 and 7 they associate structured learning with worksheets and tragically, boredom.

Now, for my plea. PLEASE consider the affect the following items will have on the experience of our children as a nation. I will limit it to three main points although there are so many more than that to be alarmed about:

- 1.) The aggressive "pushing down" of skill-sets to younger ge groups as well as pushing more advanced curriculum on educationally-depressed children or those with special needs (none of which my children are - not my motivation here). Not all children are ready at the same time to learn the same things. Some of this needs to be gauged by the teachers. With the standardization of curriculum and rigorous testing, little room is left for this. And there is no acknowledgement of individuality within the learning process. Pushing reading on children before they are ready develops a sense of failure, not advancement. Case in point: the common core reading curriculum being taught in second grade this year at our public grade school, which is a top-ranked school in Wisconsin with heavy parental involvement, has been recognized as being "very aggressive", "too much to cover in the time allotted", and "cutting into the more creative learning activities", as stated by the teachers. How are school's who are not performing anywhere close to top-levels possibly going to fair well in this situation? Please consider Developmentally Appropriate Practices within the curriculum and the best

practices of top-ranked countries with regard to education:

- Finland: does not begin formal instruction until the age of seven. Instead, their focus is on teaching young children HOW to learn through experience, exploration, and play.

- Singapore: values a social-competency model, holistic development, and a play-based structure over academics in the early years

- Please consider how specific curriculum changes will affect the abstract thinking capabilities in our children for years to come. Yes, our children likely will not have to recall and apply the fictional books they read in high school (which is being reduced by common core), apply the operations learned in calculus (which is deemed not valuable by common core), and likely will rarely write in cursive (which is not a requirement in the common core curriculum), they WILL, however, need to think abstractly in order to problem-solve, invent, create, innovate, etc. We are weakening their creative thinking muscle by eliminating or dumbing down all those academic activities that are more subjective by nature, more artistic in form, and represent the very essence of humanity itself. We will output a common product through this educational system. One that is average in thinking, average in achievement, and average in production, at best. This is unacceptable to me as a parent and citizen of a nation built on imagination and enormous dreams.

-Finally, testing. The SBTC tests have not been validated or tested anywhere near the levels they should have been according to the law. Any private organization implementing testing in the manner the SBTC testing is being carried forward would likely be held accountable for their socially irresponsible actions in a court of law. Where is the testing that these tests produce valid results and have been developed in a way that is not harmful to any of those taking the tests? Also, why is there not transparency in the ACTUAL questions being asked? Where is the protection for the use of the information collected? Finally, having an adaptive system in place, what checks and balances have been established to ensure that the questions do not encroach on one's privacy. And, we are speaking of the privacy of children who have limited ability to even know they are being taken advantage of. I am not submitting my children to an undefined, undisclosed experiment developed in a way proven to be scientifically inappropriate and irresponsible.

Please consider these points as you make decisions that will affect generations to come and ultimately our countries future. Common experience, common abilities, common ideas is not what this country or any success has ever been built on. Why is this now being used as the training philosophy for our children?

Please do not carry out the Common Core Curriculum in the state of

Wisconsin and do not subject Wisconsin's children to unproven SBTC testing on a bi-annual basis.

megandrevline@gmail.com

megan drevline

460 church st

Kohler, wi 53044

Sir:

Please be aware that I feel you did a suburb job of moderating the Common Core discussion at Eau Claire on Wednesday, Oct. 23rd. I share your anger, (if that's not too strong a word), at the Dept. of Public Instruction not allowing for public input when the initial decision was made to adopt these "watered down" standards.

I think this whole issue needs to be reviewed by a committee comprised of prominent private citizens, with corresponding input from parents and employers, before a decision on implementation is made.

Thank you for your efforts on this behalf.

Sincerely,

H. Davis Kuhn
Linda J. Kuhn
Chippewa Falls, WI

I wanted to share my frustration with the hearing process. I attended the Madison and Wausau hearings. We arrived in Madison at 10 am and were not called to speak until 7 pm of which we had commitments back in our school districts so were not able to speak in Madison. We arrived in Wausau today at 11 am so that we could sign up to speak at the hearing. I'm frustrated that it is nearing 5 pm and it is only the 4th speaker of which only one has been from Wisconsin and all have been from "other" organizations. There is something wrong with this process when you choose to hear from "your experts". We should be hearing from Wisconsinites who have a vested interest in our children not your invited speakers. Your process is flawed!

Frustrated Wisconsin citizen,
Jennifer Gracyalny

I am opposed Common Core Standards!

mapsandrew@aol.com

Pam Behnke

576 Luco Road

Fond du Lac

Dear Committee Members,

I was unable to attend the hearing today so would like to submit my testimony in writing. I did attend the hearing in Madison on Oct 3rd and testified in person. The attached testimony is a slightly modified version of that testimony.

Thank You,
Jeff Ziegler
Math Teacher - Madison Metropolitan School District
President - Marshall Board of Education
Parent

Testimony to Select Committee for Review of Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts.

First I should let you know that I am a teacher who has spent the last several years studying the CCSS and helping other teachers throughout the state prepare to teach them. So I like to think I am informed about what they are and what they are not.

I do, however, bring other perspectives to this issue as well. I am a parent of two high school students, I am a local school board member, and of course I am a taxpayer. All of these different perspectives inform my opinions on education in general, and the CCSS in particular.

As we debate the pros and cons of the CCSS initiative I think it is important to recognize and acknowledge something about any document that is created by a group of people. It is a compromise. Since it is a compromise it is likely that nobody thinks it is perfect. The CCSS are no different. I don't think it is a perfect set of standards. Like most people, I think I could do better. Of course if I were to write my perfect standards others would likely find them less than perfect. Some might even think they were about the worst standards they had ever seen.

As I stated earlier I have been working with these standards for several years. In fact, I've been working with them since before they were completed. Because of my work I was able to see and comment on early drafts of the math standards. And while I still don't think that the end result is everything I would have wanted, I do think that they improved throughout the vetting process.

On the whole the CCSS for Mathematics are focused, clearer, and more rigorous than our previous state standards. But I feel the need to say something about rigor. Part of the impetus behind this hearing is the statement by our Governor and others that Wisconsin should have standards that are more rigorous than other states. Disregarding that there are different definitions of rigor, we need to be careful of falling into what I will call the "more rigorous" trap. We could indeed draft a set of standards that are more rigorous than the CCSS. Then Illinois could rise to the challenge and create standards that are even more rigorous than our more rigorous standards to show how their education system is better than ours. We would then of course be compelled to create even more rigorous standards. I hope you can see where this is going.

Questioning whether or not we could write more rigorous standards is the wrong question to be asking. The question we should be asking ourselves is: Do our standards have the proper level of rigor? This is a much more complex question. To answer this question we need to consider a number of things. We need to decide on our desired outcomes. We need to consider how students develop cognitively and emotionally. We need to consider the ability of our education systems to deliver curriculum and instruction aligned to our desired level of rigor.

Debating whether or not the CCSS set a high enough bar for rigor is the wrong debate and in my opinion a waste of everyone's time. A conversation about how to ensure we have the right level of rigor is a conversation I, and many educators I know, would be more than happy to have.

All of that being said, I think it would be a big mistake to throw these standards out under the misguided belief that Wisconsin could create better, or more rigorous, or whatever superlative you want to use, standards. Using whatever process someone develops to write these new standards, we would inevitably end up with standards that would once again be a compromise. Unless, of course, you want to let one person write them. Even then, when finished we would have a set of standards that a few people love, a few people hate, with most people falling somewhere along a continuum between the two.

My argument for not throwing out the CCSS and starting over does not hinge on my love of the standards. As I stated before, I fully acknowledged that they are flawed. And I think we need to both acknowledge these flaws and work on improving the standards as we move forward with implementation. In fact, I look forward to engaging in this work with educators in Wisconsin and across the country. Right there is one of the big advantages of using the CCSS, we won't have to do the work of implementing them and improving them by ourselves. We can work with educators across the country.

But my main reason for urging you to not give in to those who want to throw out these standards is that educators at the state, district, and school level in our state have spent the last few years preparing to implement these standards. I'm not even sure how you would calculate the resources that have gone into this. Districts and schools have probably spent millions of dollars on teacher training and curricular resources. They have invested untold man hours getting ready. Teachers have spent their own money and given up their personal time learning about these standards and what they need to do make sure their practices match the rigor expected. I have spent many hours working with these teachers and seen first-hand how invested they are in the

Jeff Ziegler

implementation of the CCSS. As part of this work schools and districts have recognized the need to provide time for teachers to collaborate and have adjusted their practices and schedules to make this happen.

If we were to throw out the CCSS with the intent of starting over we would once again be doing what has happened far too often in education. Just as we are about to see the payoff of all of this effort focused on a singular target, we would be moving that target. We would once again be sending the message to educators that they shouldn't get too invested in the next big movement because it won't last. When we do this we make it that much harder to do the things we need to do to improve our schools.

I urge you not to make this mistake once again. Yes, we need to work on improving these standards, so let's focus on doing that, not take another step backwards because someone feels the need to pander to one group or another.

Jeff Ziegler

High School Math Teacher – Madison Metropolitan School District

President – Marshall Board of Education

Parent of two high school students

I am very concerned with the direction our school districts are heading by the implementation of Common Core. I would prefer that it be reversed.

Pkrose1@att.net

Karin

Rosenfeldt

Fond du lac wi 54935

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt,

I have gone to two informational meetings on Common Core, one headed by a school district and the other headed by a college professor. I have read materials pro and con as well as watch related videos. From what I have learned, it is my desire that Wisconsin NOT adopt the Common Core Standards. I do believe Wisconsin can do better than these for future generations of adults.

I am particularly concerned about the teaching methods for math. From what I have seen, they seem awfully complicated to answer easy math problems. Children are getting frustrated (some who previously loved math are now hating it) and parents are confused as to how to help their children with the new math. If the job of educators and parents are to prepare the children for college and careers, which indeed it is, why change the very basics of math? To this day, I can still recite my multiplication tables and do mental math without the need for calculators, only using calculators to save time. I believe we will be doing our state's children a great disservice by implementing Common Core Standards, especially math.

I am also concerned about the cost of implementing this program as well as costs incurred by the state and local level in years to come. Are there other standards that can be adopted, standards that involve more parental involvement? These standards have been implemented in the schools without community involvement for the most part. Is this a sign of how it will be in the future? Will it be less and less local control of our schools and more top-down control?

There are many other issues in Common Core Standards that I am concerned about but won't delve into them at this time. I urge you to learn more about the negative side effects of Common Core Standards and reject them for Wisconsin schools as so many other states are now considering. Wisconsin CAN do better than Common Core Standards!!!

Thank you,

Laurie Hottenstein
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Antigo, WI 54409-8908
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bumalot@gmail.com

Dear Senator Farrow and Representative Thiesfeldt,

It was a pleasure meeting you, earlier this month, at the education roundtable discussion with invited speaker, Former Assistant Deputy of Education Robert Pasternack.

I am sorry that a representative from the Governmental Affairs Committee of WIBIDA was not able to attend one of the public hearings on the Common Core State Standards. Please share the attached testimony from Wisconsin Branch of the International Dyslexia Association's support of the CCSS with committee members. These standards are an important and long in coming new beginning to improve student academic outcomes. Though much work is yet to be done, we cannot afford to step away from the standards; doing so would protract needed reforms. WI students cannot wait.

Thank You.

Cheryl Ward
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Wisconsin Branch

of the
International Dyslexia Association
Support for the Common Core Standards Implementation

October 2013

*The Wisconsin Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (WIBIDA) is a non-profit association of individuals **dedicated to the study and remediation of dyslexia and to the support and encouragement of individuals with dyslexia and their families.** Accordingly, our position on the DPI's proposed amended rules for identification of children with specific learning disabilities is driven by our desire to improve reading instruction for those children in Wisconsin who struggle most.*

Common Core Support

The Wisconsin Branch of the International Dyslexia Association strongly supports the adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for students in K-12th grade. The English Language Arts standards lay out the key developmental milestones that all good readers must attain, from beginning decoding skills to deep reading of complex text and effective written expression. The foundational reading skill standards of CCSS, for the first time in Wisconsin, identifies these milestones and allows an effectively trained educator to discern when and what a child instructionally needs to meet the standards.

The CCSS provides WI students and teachers with the most rigorous English Language Arts standards than ever before, deserving bipartisan support and the support of every parent in Wisconsin. These foundational skills are not an end in and of themselves; rather, they are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines.

The CCSS, based on research and evidence-based instructional practices, will elevate student academic outcomes. The standards are also integrated with other important education initiatives that are underway and paying dividends in Wisconsin, including student screening, early intervention, assessment, teacher preparation, professional development, and classroom and school effectiveness. These efforts are all intricately linked and support each other.

WIBIDA was proud to have helped author Act 166, passed with bipartisan support, which requires increases content mastery in reading instruction for teachers seeking licensure and provides for the screening for at-risk reading of every Wisconsin kindergarten student. WIBIDA's history of working with students with reading disabilities uniquely qualifies us to contribute to knowledge and training of foundational reading standards and instructional practices. These standards are directed toward fostering students' understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions of the English writing system.

Support for the CCSS

- **The CCSS are not watered-down. The standards are significantly more rigorous than previous standards, setting the floor for what students should be able to know and do in core subject.** CCSS are an enormous first step to improving student outcome standards in foundational reading attainment.

- **Those who denounce the CCSS as being a national effort being forced on schools by the federal government are promoting a myth.** This collaborative effort by more than 40 states, including Wisconsin, adopted the standards after review and soliciting feedback from multiple stakeholder groups, including business, professional, parents, advocacy and policy stakeholders.
- **Reading Standards represent a thoughtful consensus regarding meaningful and obtainable educational goals.** Many aspects of education are appropriately left to local control; however the process of reading acquisition does not vary from community to community. There is still a **huge role for local districts to play in the implementation of the standards;** teachers will still design their own courses and pick their own reading lists. To keep Wisconsin moving forward, districts must be able to focus their resources on those critical tasks, and the Department of Public Instruction must put its energy into supporting local communities. Wisconsin's momentum will be derailed if we push those efforts aside in order to take up a State standards-writing project.
- **The collaboration between CCSS states will allow for states to share available resources, learn from one another and support students who move from state to state.**

The CCSS can benefit students with disabilities by:

Fostering an environment of high expectations for all students. High expectations of all students drive achievement. The CCSS challenges students with reading disabilities, which have average to above average IQ measures, to achieve the equivalent standards of their peers in the general education classroom.

Individualizing instruction. The CCSS is designed to assist teachers in identifying and addressing a student's area of need. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) aligns goals of the both the Standards and student by adjusting materials or procedures, and not the standards themselves. Overtime, the result of teacher examination in reading knowledge, ACT 166, reading teachers will gain knowledge and improve instructional skills for students with reading disabilities, including those with dyslexia.

Again, WIBIDA strongly supports the CCSS as an important first step, which will guide improved content rigor by using evidence and science based researched instructional practices that can be effectively used in classrooms will benefit our children, our teachers, and our State.

Submitted by:

Cheryl Ward, MS, CALP

Past-President of the Wisconsin Branch of the International Dyslexia Association
Governmental Affairs Committee

Pam Heyde

Chair- WIBIDA Governmental Affairs Committee

If Wisconsin continues to implement Common Core despite all of the testimony from so many experts as well as concerned parents, our legislature will have not done their job. There is more than enough evidence against moving forward (without further investigation or input from those affected) and to ignore this would be a grave injustice.

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Tammi Shaffer

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Green Lake, WI 54941

Thanks for holding these hearings. I come as a very concerned citizen, as a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. I've been involved in issues for a very long time and nothing has concerned me as much as Common Core because it is a federal program that will certainly continue to grow and change and without local control.

Federal control of education is unconstitutional. The Founders feared that federal officials and federal agencies would try to invade or control the activities assigned to the states. They therefore included the Tenth Amendment to remind the federal government that it had no authority in any area not specifically described in the Constitution. Education is NOT specifically described in the Constitution.

Just look at all the bloated and irresponsible federal government agencies and ask yourself if you really want that for our schools. Just look at what control any individual or group has when they try to fix anything that is broken with them and ask yourself how you would be able to do anything about a federal education agency that will dictate how to run your school and what to teach your kids.

Common Core is just that...an unconstitutional federal education policy that is a disaster waiting to happen!

If you must implement a learning plan, implement something that's not through the federal government, and unconstitutional. If Wisconsin could implement what Massachusetts uses because they have excelled in Reading, Math, English and Science for the last ten years why wouldn't Wisconsin consider it? Those standards are available to states FREE – NO CHARGE, and they can be implemented NOW.

As a previous speaker acknowledged...this is available on the internet.

Joyce Bant
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Testimony at October 30, 2013 Common Core meeting in Wausau

Thanks for holding these hearings. I come as a very concerned citizen, as a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. I've been involved in issues for a very long time and nothing has concerned me as much as Common Core because it is a federal program that will certainly continue to grow and change and without local control.

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October 30, 2013

Dear Honorable Representative Thiesfelt:

No one entrusted with developing laws that govern how our children are taught to read in America should proceed without becoming familiar with the history behind the reading war. This history provides insight into how reading reform efforts were continuously undermined for decades, which lead reformers to develop common core state standards as one strategy to overcome barriers to improve reading outcomes. The main purpose for common core state standards was to clarify what evidence based reading instruction is, and rid defective whole language methods from American schools.

Legislators, especially newly elected federal or state legislators, may not be familiar with the reading war. This makes legislators vulnerable to being influenced by pro-whole individuals who use the cover of prestigious university titles or by anti-phonics organizations such as the International Reading Association, and now the Tea Party, to undermine real reading reform, by preventing the establishment of properly taught phonics instruction in schools. (Please see attached History of the Reading war)

What is at stake? If legislators get this wrong and toss Common Core standards, sending them back to the drawing table, Wisconsin children will be doomed to continue scoring poorly on reading tests for years to come, while new standards are written. The only winners will be the pro-whole language establishment, which makes money off of plying their defective whole language products. These products literally harm children. Whole language fails to teach 30% to read, requiring intervention. Many of the remaining 70% are weak readers lacking reading skills needed to handling college course work or function well in the workforce. Properly taught phonics on the other hand teaches 95% of ALL students to read and produces strong readers. The, Lead to Read Task force member, Dr. Dan Gustafson, also points DPI's final interpretation of the standards IS VERY WRONG in his two open letters to DPI in 2011 [1,2]. Gustafson warns that DPI fosters defective whole language based reading practices. Continuation of whole language in our schools would be horrible indeed, and result in empty, ineffective, reading reform. Plus this could make the state vulnerable to law suits for failure to comply with providing best practice evidence based reading methods to children. The recent successful case against Michigan for failure to teach students to read should make Wisconsin legislators heed warnings about defective whole language and insist on eliminating it from Wisconsin schools. Please read my attachment that discusses this in detail and what needs to be done.

Thank you for your concern and interest in Wisconsin's Common Core Standards, and your strong commitment to make sure Wisconsin delivers a quality evidenced based education to our students.

With great Respect,

Janet Monteith-Wong
8950

3570 Bending Brae Ct. Brookfield WI, 53005 262-790-

1) **Problems with Common Core PDF: 'Wisconsin DPI- Must purge Whole Language bias from Common Core ASAP'** by Janet Monteith-Wong

2) **The Reading War-The History of up to the battle over Common Core**
By Janet Monteith-Wong

Here are the links to Dr. Gustafson's two open letters to the Read to Lead Task Force from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Aug. 23, 2011 article by Amy Hetzner, 'Reading program plans

questioned-concerns raised about DPI's approach to developing a model curriculum?:
<http://www.jsonline.com/news/education/128291288.html>)

- 1) http://www.schoolinfosystem.org/pdf/2011/07/openletter_to_read_to_wi_lead_task_force72011.pdf
- 2) https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FwjYXnaX-Rp3NLIAXvpoWB-XoGQwh81D7gS1HlnHqk/edit?hl=en_US%23&pli=1

Wisconsin DPI – Must purge Whole language bias from Common Core

ASAP:

by Janet Monteith-Wong

Though, I do not advocate tossing out the Common Core State Standards completely, I do strongly advise that the Wisconsin's "interpretation", of the common core standards of reading, be rewritten IMMEDIATELY to eliminate all whole language ambiguity and bias. Removal of defective whole language materials and practices is urgent in light of the recent legal precedent in Michigan which could embolden similar legal action against states for negligence to prevent reading failures. (HP students win in Court; The Michigan Citizen; July 3, 13; <http://michigancitizen.com/hp-students-win-in-court/>).

Given the enormous scientific evidence amassed, proving whole language reading methods, even in popular remediation programs (i.e. Reading Recovery), actually harm children due to the high incidence of reading failure, clearly, this demands defective whole language products need to be removed from schools. However, despite decades of experts warnings about faulty whole language products resulting in unnecessary reading failures, DPI chose to ignore the facts, resulting in massive harm to thousands of children who were left functionally illiterate, with damaging impact on lives, and society.

Wisconsin cannot escape the evidence of how it failed these children. The dismal reading scores of Wisconsin students says it all. (view scores at Wisconsin Reading Coalition website: <http://www.wisconsinreadingcoalition.org/>). Wisconsin could face law suits from parents of children harmed by reading failure caused by defective whole language products or practices. This includes 'balanced' instruction products, as the phonics component in these products is not taught properly, rendering the phonics useless.

DPI could also be sued by districts or schools for improperly supplying faulty authoritative guidance, which blatantly ignores accepted evidence based reading practices, causing districts or schools to adopt defective whole language products which harmed children.

Wisconsin's whole language biased interpretation of the CCSS is a culmination of damning, whole language, evidence against DPI; showing DPI ignored warnings by endorsing defective whole language products and actively supporting whole language practices for years. That means DPI flagrantly misled, schools and the public, about the dangers of whole language, and this directly caused the mass reading failures in Wisconsin.

Still DPI wants to persist in misleading the public regarding whole language?

If DPI continues to endorse defective whole language products and practices and the legislators do nothing to stop DPI, the legislator will then become complicit in this tragedy of chronic reading failures, and they will guarantee more children and their futures will be harmed.

Legislators need to make sure DPI takes immediate action to facilitate the elimination of whole language based curriculum or practices from Wisconsin schools to prevent the possibility of legal action if :

- (1) DPI fails to properly guide and assist districts and schools in understanding that whole language methods are no longer acceptable reading practices and must be eliminated.
- (2) DPI fails to provide clear and proper descriptions, curriculum models, or known examples, of what constitutes scientific, evidence based, reading instruction.
- (3) DPI fails to provide guidance and assistance to districts and schools in procuring only legitimate, best practice, evidence based reading programs,

(4) DPI allows district or schools to purposely or unwitting purchase faulty whole language products that are openly non-evidenced based whole language products, or fails to help identify which products masquerade as Scientific Reading Research based, and this results in reading failure or financial loss to replace faulty curriculums.

(5) DPI fails to make a range of ratings system available about curriculum materials, which enables districts, schools and parents to know the level of whole language bias in the products

(6) DPI fails to provide parameter of a reasonable cut off, in rating systems, of what is the acceptable level of whole language bias in curriculums, to prevent reading failures;

(7) DPI fails to warn schools and provide guidance to, correct whole language defects in certain curriculums products by adding evidence based supplemental reading materials along with staff training to counter the defective whole language issues and make the products acceptable.

(8) DPI and the state fail to eliminate teacher preparation programs that continue to teach faulty whole language practices to future teachers.

(9) Teachers could sue their colleges of education for negligence or academic fraud, for knowingly teaching inferior whole language reading instruction methods, and fraudulently passing whole language off as a best practice, scientific backed, reading method; and are withholding proper instruction in best practice, scientific, phonics based reading skills.

(10) Parent/s could sue a school, district or state of Wisconsin for negligence and fraud, due to teaching an inferior and defective reading instruction method, well known to be associated a high rate of reading failure, which led to the unnecessary reading failure and emotional harm to a child or children.

How should DPI proceed to remedy the situation and prevent further harm to children and protect Wisconsin tax payers from bearing the burden of lawsuits? Unfortunately, it is too late to prevent DPI from lawsuits due to past harm done to children over decades of whole language induced reading failures. People do have a right to be compensated for the damage caused by defective products and the practitioners using them. The best DPI can do now, is to prevent any further harm to children.

DPI can do this by taking immediate steps to eliminate the defective whole language bias, programs and practices from the entire educational system in Wisconsin. That includes eliminating whole language instruction from Wisconsin colleges of education, down to making sure every reading teacher in Wisconsin can demonstrate, in a live classroom setting, the delivery of evidence based phonics reading instruction, and the instruction administered by the teacher produces a high rate of reading success.

IMMEDIATELY DPI should:

- 1) Fire or retire whoever wrote the Wisconsin Interpretation of the reading standards
- 2) Hire an expert in evidenced based reading instruction to rewrite the Wisconsin Interpretation of the Reading Standards, to eliminate whole language bias and provide evidence based guidance.

[1] The Science of Reading and its Educational Implications ; Mark S. Seidenberg ; Dept. of Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison; <http://lcnl.wisc.edu/publications/archive/261.pdf>

- 3) Conduct study of the CCSS interpretations from states with top reading scores; use as models.

- 4) Consider hiring consultants from SoprisWest, to train teachers in evidence based reading instruction. According to the Louisa Moats article 'Whole Language High Jinks'[2] SoprisWest succeeded in turning around 10 failing schools in Montgomery Alabama in two years; with 90% of the Kindergarteners and 80% of 1-3rd graders testing at grade level.
- 5) Make this Louisa Moats article mandatory reading for teachers, principals, administrators [2] "Whole Language High Jinks-How to tell when "Scientifically based reading instruction isn't" http://www.edexcellence.net/sites/default/files/publication/pdfs/Moats2007_7.pdf
- 6) Immediately warn schools and districts to cease using whole language materials, teaching practices or principles, (this includes other whole language based products such as 'balanced' instruction, Four Blocks, 'Guided' reading, 'Close' reading, Reading Recovery and others)
- 7) Provide schools with examples of evidence based materials. For instance this simple but effective FREE phonics manual by Hazel Loring called "**Reading made easy with Blend Phonics for First Grade**". http://www.donpotter.net/pdf/reading_made_easy_with_blen.pdf
- 8) The original CCSS are not perfect. It is DPI's duty to provide the leadership and expertise to identify and warn schools about which standards contain whole language bias in the original CCSS, and post online the corrected standards to replace the flawed ones.
- 9) DPI should correct these flaws in the original CCSS text, for the next printing, by utilizing the ability to change up to 15% of the base line CCS standards wording.
- 10) DPI should announce their initiative to promote best practice evident based reading instruction and push to eliminate whole language bias form the school system.

- a. This should include a statement of intent to correct the Wisconsin Interpretation of CCSS.
- b. Resources for teachers and public to become more familiar with best practice instruction
- c. Resources to help schools and districts to identify whole language materials that need to be eliminated; versus evidence based curriculum materials to obtain.

Example resources:

[2] "Whole Language High Jinks-How to tell when "Scientifically based reading instruction isn't""; Louisa Moats; 2007
http://www.edexcellence.net/sites/default/files/publication/pdfs/Moats2007_7.pdf

[3] "Roll call Combatants in the Reading War": by Patrick Groff (compiled around 2004? Good source of authors to evaluate if curriculum books are whole language or evidence based. If need updated list Mrs. Joy Sweet, Executive Director of National Right to Read Foundation, may be able to help, contact her here: info@nrff.org ;
<http://www.readingstore.com/RollCallofCombatants.htm>

[4] "Whole Language Lives On: The Illusion of Balanced Reading Instruction"; Louisa Moats ; 2000; The B. Fordham Foundation;
<http://www.ldonline.org/article/6394/>

[5] "The Reckless Ruminations of Regie Routman"; by Patrick Groff ; 1998 ;
<http://www.arthurhu.com/99/03/wl.txt>

[6] "How Johnny Should Read"; Collins, James; 1997 Oct. 27th TIME article on line
<http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1997/10/20/time/special.reading.html>

[7] "Preventing Reading Failure: An Examination of the Myths of Reading Instruction" Groff, Patrick; 1987; National Book Company

[8] Phonics vs. Whole Language ; Phyllis Schafly; The Phyllis Schafly Report Vol.29, No. 12 ; (July 1996) <http://www.ewtn.com/library/HOMESCHL/PHOVSWL.HTM>

[9] "How Spelling Supports Reading – And Why it is More Regular and Predictable that you May Think"; Louisa Moats ; American Federation Of Teachers; Winter 2005/06

<http://www.aft.org/pdfs/americaneducator/winter0506/Moats.pdf>http://www.donpotter.net/pdf/reading_made_easy_with_blen.pdfhttp://www.donpotter.net/pdf/reading_made_easy_with_blen.pdf

- 11) DPI should evaluate reading remediation programs used in the state, to ensure all are best practice evidenced based products. *Reading Recovery* is a whole language based product and needs to be discontinued.

[10] Early Reading Instruction: Why has Reading Recovery Survived? Paul W. Bennett ; March 2011 ; School House Consulting-Educchatter's Blog ; Canada
<http://educchatter.wordpress.com/2011/03/10/early-reading-instruction-why-has-reading-recovery-survived/>

- 12) DPI should consider providing cutting edge reading interventions such as '*Fast Forward*'. Researcher used fMRI scans to demonstrate dyslexic children's brains improve significantly with phonological awareness training (the Fast Forward program), resulted in near normal reading ability. ;

[11] '[Changes in Brain Function in Children with Dyslexia after Training](#)'; Temple, Elise; ; The Phonics Bulletin Vol. 1 May 2003
<http://www.neuronlearning.eu/contentFiles/articlePDFs/PhonicsBulletin3pgsmall.pdf>
2003 International Reading Association Original scientific article: Temple, E., et al., *Neural deficits in children with dyslexia ameliorated by behavioral remediation*; Evidence from fMRI. Proc Natl Acad Sci USA, 2002 100(5): p. 2860-2865

[12] "When older Students can't Read" Louisa Moats; Center for Development; reprinted 2013 ; http://www.cdl.org/resource-library/articles/older_read.php

- 12) DPI needs better reading assessment tools, to accurately measure student acquisition of reading skills and identify if support is needed in the five strands of reading: phonemic awareness; phonics knowledge (sounds and blending skills); reading fluency; vocabulary; and comprehension. *Running Records* is not recommended to be sufficient.

[13] 'Critique of Running Records; by Ken E. Blaiklock ; UNITEC Institute of Technology 2003; <http://publications.aare.edu.au/03pap/bla03738.pdf>

CONCLUSION:

DPI should concentrate on re-writing Wisconsin's Interpretation of the Common core reading standards as soon as possible, to prevent Wisconsin from being vulnerable to law suits over reading failures, but most importantly, to provide best practice reading instruction that our children deserve, to ensure they are prepared for a successful future in college or career. Legislators need to make sure this happens.

Examples of CCSS problems to fix, and 'whole language principles' to remove:

Below are some examples of the problems with the Wisconsin's interpretation of the CC standards. This is not a complete assessment of the all the ELA standards, but only focuses on the standards related to foundational reading skills. A more thorough review needs to be done by expert in evidence based reading instruction to identify all whole language bias and issues that need to be eliminated. Then a new evidenced based Interpretation of the CC reading standards needs to be written.

Examples of Wisconsin Interpretation of CCSS:

Example 1:

From Wisconsin CCSS, page 115

Grade 1 Students:

2.

- e) Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions

There is a frenzy, or hyper-focus, surrounding **phonemic awareness**, which is overshadowing the **phonics skills that need to be taught**. Publishers are adding to this problem, and now it appears many teachers are confusing phonemic awareness with phonics skills. This is very bad....**The standard above may be the root cause of the confusion!** In the Grade 1, 2.e. standard, shown above, 'phonemic awareness' is not the correct term that should be used. The term should be 'phonics knowledge'. Words do make a big difference and this standard needs to be fixed! Here is some information to clarify the difference between phonemic awareness and phonics knowledge.

What Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Knowledge really mean:

Kindergarten:

Phonemic awareness: is usually associated with **preschool or kindergarten** activities and involves: pointing out rhyming words; counting syllables heard in words; identifying beginning or ending sounds of spoken words; or learning to sing the alphabet song.

Phonics knowledge: in kindergarten starts when students learn to associate written letters with the a-z first sounds. It is VERY IMPORTANT that the students also start practicing the skill of blending these sounds to read simple words like: cat, man, cop, bed, etc. Writing words is also vital to help create the neuropath ways for the letter-sound associations.

(Note about site words: It is very common to teach some site words along with the a-z first phonics sounds to allow students to read simple sentences. Phonics purist may discourage any site words. Site words often taught may include: a, the, I, me, so, my etc. However, teaching all the 220 Dolch 'site words' is NOT a good idea, since most actually do follow a phonics rule or common spelling pattern. In any case, the emphasis MUST always be on practicing blending the a-z first sounds until the vital phonics skill of sound-out words is mastered. It can take up to a year for some students to master sounding out words using phonics sounds; because the brain is literally rewiring itself to perform this task, which takes time.)

First grade:

Phonics knowledge: In first grade students should learn the main secondary phonics sounds, which includes: sh, wh, th, oo, oa, ar, silent e, ay, ew, etc. There are around 70 main phonics sounds to be taught. Students MUST be given ample time to practice sounding out words using each new sound as it is learned. Sounding-out practice of new sounds, along with reading books reinforces the learning and develops a strong phonics strategy to read. If phonics instruction is done properly, most first grade students will be able to read well by midyear. An example of a simple, but highly effective, phonics method that can be added to any curriculum, is available for free, at professional reading tutor Don Potter's web site. This FREE manual is called "**Reading made easy with Blend Phonics First Grade**" by Hazel Loring. Loring was a first grade teacher who successfully used her method to enable students to read by winter break. It is also simple enough for parents to use at home. Advanced phonics sounds are then taught in subsequent grades along with learning new vocabulary and concepts which builds knowledge to enhance comprehension.

Example 2:

From Wisconsin's CCSS, page 116:
Grade 1 Students:

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 1 reading and content*, choosing flexibility from an **array of strategies**.
 - a. Use sentence-level **context as a clue** to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Use frequently occurring **affixes as a clue** to the meaning of a word.
 - c. Use frequently occurring **root words** (e.g. look) and their inflectional forms (e.g., looks, looks, looking)

The standard shown above, for Grade 1, 4. a., b., and c. , is a tortured mix of ambiguous whole language terms and ideas, which could be easily misinterpreted by a whole language trained teacher to justify continuing to use whole language practices.

Yes, I suppose, who does not look at the sentence context to try to figure out the meaning of words at times. But isn't figuring out the meaning of words, actually what a dictionary is for? Shouldn't the standard then involve developing dictionary skills? Yes it should. And teaching dictionary skills should be started in first grade. Therefore, mastering dictionary skills to figure out the meaning of words should replace the entire standard above.

But, let us continue examining the standard as it is currently.

The problem with "**context as a clue**" is the words used are the same as the classic whole language strategy to look for meaning of words from context clues in the text, or even from pictures. The other classic whole language strategy is to 'guess' at the meaning of words. The 'guessing' strategy was not mentioned in the standard above, but whole language trained teachers would know, or would assume , that 'guessing' is one of the **array of strategies** eluded to in the standard.

The other strategies mentioned in the standard, is the use of common **affixes** and **root words** to figure out the meaning of words, which is also a whole language concept. This strategy actually can be used by students in higher grades when advanced phonics and spelling is taught; and students study Greek and Latin roots and affixes. But, this is really is not appropriate for first grade. **Whole language trained teachers are also taught, by their professors, that phonics decoding skills are considered as the last resort strategy to figure out a words.** This is in reality the exact opposite of what a student should do.

What the standard should state is, if a student does not recognize the words meaning after sounding it out using phonics knowledge, the word should be looked up in the dictionary, then added to the students list of new vocabulary to help build vocabulary knowledge, which is the foundation of comprehension. There is no need for a whole-language, **array of strategies**, to figure out the meaning of a word. Properly taught phonics and a dictionary will do.

Example 3: The problem with 'Disciplinary Literacy' term : (found Section 4, page 86-89 and 93)

What is 'Disciplinary Literacy'?!!! (Is reading and writing now considered a punishment by DPI?)

The term, 'Disciplinary Literacy', used in the Wisconsin common core materials is an interesting misuse of words. Apparently it is a term coined by Jennifer Altieri, in her 2011 book, 'Content Counts! Developing Disciplinary Literacy Skills, K-6'. (from Wis. CC page 91) Can this term be a telling Freudian slip on the part of a whole language trained individual! According to OneLookDictionary.com, 'disciplinary' means, "connected with the punishment of people who do not obey rules". Is author Altieri, or someone from DPI, subtly blaming teachers of non-English subjects and maybe teachers in general, for the failure of whole-language or balance-instruction to raise reading scores? In order for whole-language to succeed, a classic whole-language principle is to enlist teachers from all subject areas to provide opportunities for reading so students can try to memorize the whole-language controlled sight-word- vocabulary. This is often done by purchasing a publisher's expensive coordinated curriculums for science, social studies, or other subjects, even math. So is 'Disciplinary literacy' punishment for the teachers who opted not to buy these curriculums? Or are teachers in general being punished, and made to feel guilty because they did not work hard enough to 'obey whole-language rules' and this caused it to fail? This is a hilarious! It is NOT the teachers fault. Whole language simply does not do a good job to teach ALL children to read and produces weaker readers. But teachers are taught in college to teach it.

Does DPI mean "Inter-disciplinary" Literacy???? YES!!!!

Unfortunately, the wrong word usage in the term, 'Disciplinary Literacy', makes DPI and Wisconsin look foolish. And that is not funny. Obviously, DPI meant to use the term, "Interdisciplinary Literacy", where according to OneLookDictionary.com, 'interdisciplinary', means, "involving different subjects of study". Though, some people might view teaching or learning literacy a punishment, I am certain the term, 'Interdisciplinary Literacy', is actually what DPI wants to accomplish.

What should 'Interdisciplinary Literacy' really mean for students?

It means READING TO LEARN in all subjects and EXPRESS IN WRITING what one learned.

That means, whole language trained teachers must not confuse 'interdisciplinary literacy', with the outmoded whole language principle; which is to enlist ALL disciplines or subject areas for the underlying purpose of providing opportunities for students to memorize site-words so kids MIGHT LEARN TO READ! The intent of the common core standards should be to : Teach students to read by no later than the end of third grade, so students can then READ TO LEARN, through literacy experiences in all subjects, and apply that knowledge to practicing the art of writing well. The goal of interdisciplinary literacy, then, is to allow students to gain a deeper understanding (or comprehension) of various subjects, which includes each discipline's rich and unique vocabulary, writing styles, concepts and histories.

Note: READING TO LEARN starts with foundation of strong reading skills acquired by end of 3rd grade.

To achieve the ability to READ TO LEARN, common core is counting on K- 3 grade teachers to help students build a strong foundation in evidenced based phonics reading skills. That means NO child should ever leave third grade without the ability to read at grade level. Interventions for at risk and struggling readers needs to be applied as early as possible in K-3rd grades, when remediation can be the most effective. If a child still does not read proficiently at the end of third grade, and no identified cause for the reading failure is known (i.e. documented cognitive deficit or brain abnormality causing dyslexia), the students family could hold the school, district or state, liable for failure of instruction. All resources therefore, should be enlisted to provide reading interventions before the end of third grade.

Note: Even when reading remediation succeeds to raise students to proficient reading level, students with a history of reading problems often continue to be at risk. Such students need to be followed for several years, to evaluate and provide support if needed, in order to insure reading proficiency is maintained in subsequent grades.

Example 4: From Wisconsin CC -SECTION I Wisconsin's Approach to Academic Standards, page 23:

Literacy is an evolving concept, and becoming literate is a lifelong learning process.

As society and technology change, so does literacy. Literacy evolves as widening perspectives change the way we read, write, speak, listen, view and represent. Students begin the process of becoming literate long before entering the classroom, and continue this process in every classroom throughout their formal schooling, and long after formal schooling is completed. Literacy attainment, and especially early literacy attainment, is strengthened by responsive learning environments that include research-based core programs, strong intervention systems, and multiple ways of monitoring what learners know and are able to do. Knowing this, all educators must see themselves as both literacy teachers and literacy learners. (CCSS, p.4)

ccss , p4

Much of this statement sends the wrong message, and one we can ill afford. First, who decided that 'literacy' is an evolving concept?! Secondly, who really believes "becoming literate is lifelong learning process"? Really?!!! This sounds like a whole-language mash-up of "learning is a lifelong process". Literacy is the ability to read and write, and it is literacy that enables or ALLOWS lifelong learning. Perhaps a whole-language publisher wrote the content for Wisconsin's Approach to CC?

Becoming literate can be accomplished in first grade! One certainly does not need to take a whole life time to become literate! Though, whole-language is famous for wasting years of student's academic careers just "learning how to read". And yes, whole language often fails to teach students to read even by the time they are ready to graduate high school. That means some individuals may indeed end up taking a lifetime to become literate, because whole language failed them!

Phonics, on the other hand, when taught properly, teaches literacy quickly. Usually phonics taught students can read well enough by the end of first grade to begin READING TO LEARN!

When, a person becomes 'literate' their ability to read enables them to increase their knowledge; this includes vocabulary, facts and concepts, which aids comprehension and further builds ones foundation for understanding advanced subjects. Literacy also includes developing the ability to combine new knowledge, gained from reading or listening, and synthesizing this information with pervious knowledge to draw conclusions, which one then learns to effectively express in writing or speech.

Becoming 'literate' should NOT be considered a lifelong process! Students, from ALL backgrounds, are capable of becoming proficient readers and writers well before 12th grade. All students who graduate should demonstrate MEASURABLE 12th grade proficiency to read and write, unless there is a legitimate and documented reason that prevents this. The guiding principle should be: LITERACY IS A RIGHT, not a privilege. And the foundation for strong literacy skills begins with properly taught phonics in first grade.

Example 5:

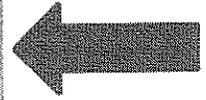
Whole language influence in Wisconsin's CC ELA standards interpretation:

Noted in DPI-power point:

Spring 2013 Cognitive disabilities Program Support Teacher and Leadership Meeting

<http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CDwQFiAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsped.dpi.wi.gov%2Ffiles%2Fsped%2Fppt%2Fcd-pst-spring-meeting.ppt&ei=ZilvUuqLIYWu4AOgv4GAAg&usg=AFQjCNHSPGkSV2oZGdT-pNGy->

| University of North Carolina's Center for Literacy and Disability Studies | Wisconsin's Foundations for English Language Arts |
|--|--|
| Learning builds over time | Literacy is an evolving concept, and becoming literate is a lifelong learning process |
| Application of knowledge and skills | English language arts instruction builds an understanding of the human experience |
| Active participation and interaction in learning activities | Literacy, language and meaning are socially constructed and are enhanced by multiple perspectives |
| Collaboration and communication | Critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity are aspects of effective English education and attributes of Wisconsin graduates |
| Ongoing comprehensive instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language | English language arts is an integrated discipline |



The Wisconsin CC interpretation is steeped in whole language principles. But, the statement, pointed to here, is particularly disturbing as it states literacy takes a lifetime to achieve! The author justifies this outlandish idea by claiming the meaning of literacy changed. Really? Says who?

Example 6:

Principles of Effective ELA Instruction

1. Repetition with variety
2. Cognitive engagement
3. Cognitive clarity
4. Personal connection with the curriculum
5. Participation of a knowledgeable other
6. A means of expressive communication
7. Significant time allocation for comprehensive instruction

Repetition is a classic and 'guiding' principle of whole language. So it is not surprising to see it is DPI #1 ELA principle. 'Guided reading', and now 'close reading', requires a pre-reading discussion, then reading the same text up to three times, to supposedly examine different concepts each time. This repetitive reading in whole language programs is actually done to give students a chance to memorize the words by sight. However, it ends up boring students to death instead.

Here is a recap of the 7 Principles of Effective ELA Instruction. Since the Principles connect all standards across the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking, and language, it is important to remember that they should also be applied to all types of instructional activities. (Great, let's reread everything three times and bore kids in all subjects)

Example 7:

Page 28

An Instructional Principle that applies to the foundation-English language arts is an integrated discipline

7. Significant time allocation for instruction

The principle of effective instruction that falls under this foundation is that we must provide significant time allocation for instruction.

Though the standards are separated into sections, the processes of reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and representing happen in a connected way, and are intended to be taught as such, in rich and authentic learning contexts. (CCSS, p. 4).

When we consider that ELA is an integrated discipline, it becomes obvious that a significant portion of instructional time needs to be allocated to each strands of ELA-reading, writing, speaking, listening and language. Historically, the only aspects of reading addressed for students with significant cognitive disabilities were letter and sight word identification. Writing was limited to copying or tracing words and letters. Now, however, the Common Core State Standards require that students receive comprehensive language and literacy instruction that includes the application of knowledge and skills. Comprehensive instruction takes more time than simply working on a few isolated literacy skills. General education elementary students receive 90 – 120 minutes of literacy instruction each day. If students without disabilities require this much instructional time, it seems that students with significant cognitive disabilities will also need at least this much instructional time dedicated to ELA.

Here is a classic example of how the DPI whole language biased author exploits and distorts a CC principle to make it fit the whole language view of teaching reading. The author takes principle 7, "Significant time allocation for instruction", and in classic whole language fashion distorts this to justify the continued use of the whole language principle to downplay the need to teach specific "isolated literary skills" like "copying or tracing words and letters", and instead teachers are told to spend more time focusing on "rich and authentic learning contexts". This will lead to the continued whole language practice of spending little time making sure students acquire basic reading (phonics) and writing skills (cursive). Instead teachers end up wasting valuable time rereading stories over and over to discuss them, while teaching basic skills students really need to learn to read and write well, are neglected. It is TRAGIC to think this kind of instruction is advocated for the cognitively disabled, but I suspect it is being applied to the English language learners and all students as well!

October 2013

The Reading war –The history up to the battle over - Common Core:

By Janet Monteith-Wong

The primary reason the Reading War persists, is faculty from colleges of education write the lucrative, but defective, whole language textbooks and curriculum materials used to teach teachers, and children. The professors fight, and resist change, from their fortress like universities; because WHOLE LANGUAGE IS THE CASH COW driving the nation's education system and the billion dollar textbook industry. Whole language methods under various names, (now called 'balanced' instruction), dominated schools since John Dewey popularized this site-word-memorization method around the turn of the century. [1, pg. 28-35]

The appeal to publisher is Whole-language requires extensive, and very expensive, curriculum materials carefully sequenced to enable children to memorize lists of words in each grade, often past middle school. When simple but effective reading methods are available for free like Hazel Loring's, 'Reading Made Easy With Blend Phonics for first grade', found on reading expert Don Potter's web site, which enables students to read well by December of first grade, one can understand why the text book industry wants to suppress phonics.

For decades teachers were, and still are, literally taught by their professors that phonics is a 'last resort' reading strategy. Teachers are told that site-word memorization, and use of context cues or pictures and word guessing is deemed more important than phonics skills. For nearly a century, so little emphasis was placed on phonics that, as one person put it, "phonics is now a lost art". Teachers cannot teach what they have not been taught. And neither can parents.

Dewey felt phonics should be taught in the loving environment of a child's home, since schools during his day were notoriously cruel environments where phonics and math drills was often done in a torturous manner. But Dewey grew to regret postponing phonics instruction. He recognized, correctly, that it becomes more difficult to teach phonics to older site word taught children [1, pg. 35]. Once a child learns to read, by phonics or a site-word approach, it is very difficult to learn and switch the strategy.

Eventually Dewey's message, to teach phonics at home, got lost completely.

For years whole language was well known to be vastly inferior to properly taught phonics, but this did not stop the text book industry from perpetuating the defective method for profits. This was famously pointed out by Rudolf Flesh in his 1955 book, 'Why Johnny Can't Read and What you can do about it' and later in his 1981 book, "Why Johnny Still Can't Read'. The landmark 1967 book, "Learning to Read-The Great Debate" by Harvard reading researcher Jeanne Chall, which showed whole language lacked valid scientific support and is inferior to phonics [2], could not even stop whole language from dominating the educational system.

Instead, after Chall's book was published, the International Reading Association (IRA) was set up in 1968 to counter attacks on whole language and launch an anti-phonics campaign. The IRA used its popular teacher trade publications to effectively suppressed pro-phonics research. Anti-phonics bias of the IRA exists to this day, and is readily apparent in its web site statements.

U.S. officials became alarmed by the rapidly declining reading scores, which was creating a crisis in the quality of military candidates due to poor literacy skills. The government commissioned a study by The National Commission of Excellence in Education, which reported in 1983: "Our nation is at risk...the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our future as a Nation and a people... If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war". [3] Declining reading scores affected ALL students across ALL social, economic or racial measures. This remains the case today.

It literally took an act of congress, in 1998, to even begin to extricate defective whole language from our schools. The 1998 Reading Excellence Act (REA), which led to the No Child Left Behind Laws, was the first time whole language domination was truly threatened. This prompted the whole-language-sophistry author and main leader of the whole language movement since the 70's, Kenneth Goodman, to write a scathing rant posted on the International Reading Association web site. His 'Comments on the Reading Excellence Act' are still available on IRA web site here: <http://www.readingonline.org/critical/ACT.html> [4]. This amounts to Goodman's 'reading war' manifesto, and blatantly calls for teachers to undermine phonics reading reform. Here are two disturbing quotes:

"Am I saying the campaign was not about reading? That's right. Yes, many players had agendas that were about reading, at least tangentially. But I believe that from the anti-public education view of those who planned and carried through the campaign, the more harm the law eventually does to teachers, teacher educators, public schools and the kids in those schools, the better. That's the amoral perspective of political campaigns anyways. Winning is its own justification. Privatization of schools depends on convincing the public education is a failed experiment"

"Some of us, myself included, have been forced to receive a political education in the course of fighting the campaign. It's helped us to see the power of money, influence, and political expertise that is arrayed against us. Such knowledge may help us fight back...These are mean times in education. And in the meantime we're learning to live under water." [4]

After Goodman started living "under water" in 1998, things still went 'swimmingly' for him. Though his prestige was diminished, he and his education professors and publisher cronies, still made money from text books and curriculum materials, when whole-language morphed into 'balanced' reading instruction. Balanced reading instruction is a hybrid curriculum, which combines whole language and phonics. This was the 'compromise' solution to satisfy both sides of the reading war.

It soon became apparent, however, that the phonics portion of "balance" reading programs is ineffective. Phonics, in balanced instruction (or whole-language programs), fails because it is not taught properly; the phonic component is deemphasized or 'embedded' and spread out over years rather than taught up

front in first grade. Plus, students are not given adequate time, if any, to practice sounding out words using the phonics sounds as taught.

That means, whole language word memorization continued to be the dominant reading strategy taught to American children for the last 13 years!

Goodman resurfaced on August 13, 2013 in Valerie Strauss's Washington blog [5], to torpedo the recent National Council for Teacher Quality report, which exposes colleges of education for failing to instruct our teachers on how to teach evidenced based reading skills. In Goodman's comments he has the audacity to blame phonics for the continued decline in reading scores over the last 13 years, despite the No Child Left Behind reading reforms, when in fact his whole language method directly caused the reading reform effort to fail! Wisconsin Reading Coalition co-founder, Steven Dysktra, responded in Strauss's blog on September 17, 2013 [6], and nails why Goodman and his gang are such dangerous hindrances to effective reading reform.

Current phonics based reading reform efforts, such as common core and teacher certification in foundational reading, are aimed at pressuring colleges to drop whole language, and prepare teachers to teach evidence based phonics reading skills instruction. If legislators are duped by Kenneth Goodman, Regie Routman or other IRA Reading Hall of Famers into dismantling these hard won, and fragile reading reforms, it will doom our children and country to years of further educational decline. We must encourage our legislators to stand up and put phonics back in schools.

P.S. In this quote by Goodman he describes his research, which forms the basis for his whole language method used to teach (but actually harmed) our nation's children for decades: *"Early in our miscue research, we came to the conclusion that a story is easier to read than a page, a page easier than a paragraph, a paragraph easier than a word, and a word easier than a letter. Our research continues to support this conclusion and we believe it to be true."* [7]

[1] Hoerl, Marguerite F.; 1997, Turning Back the Tide of Illiteracy, Halcyon House; ISBN 0-89420-298-7

[2] Chall, Jeanne S., 1967, Learning to Read: The Great Debate ; McGraw Hill, Inc.; ISBN 07-010391-7

[3] A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform; April 1983; by The National Commission on Excellence in Education; http://datacenter.spps.org/uploads/sotw_a_nation_at_risk_1983.pdf

[4] Goodman, Kenneth, "Comments on the Reading Excellence Act" *Reading Online*, www.readingonline.org Posted December 1998 © 1998-2000 International Reading Association, Inc. ISSN 1096-1232

[5] Valerie Strauss blog; August 13, 2013: 'Literacy experts Say Reformers are reviving the 'reading wars'' ; Washington Post.com; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/08/13/are-reformers-reviving-reading-wars/>

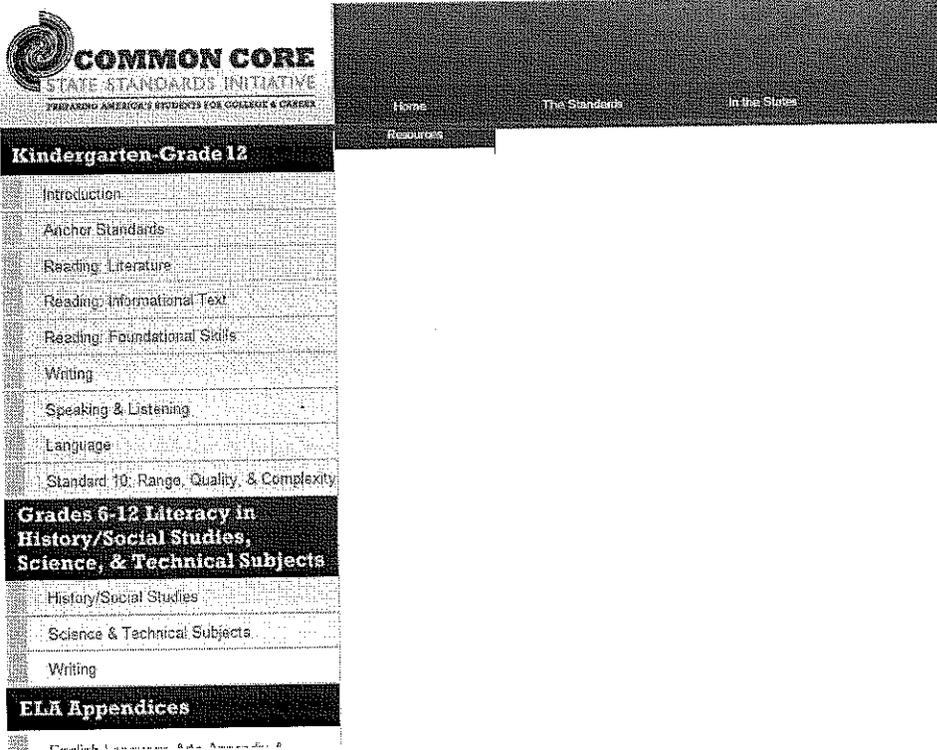
[6] Valerie Strauss blog; Sept, 17,2013: 'Another blast in the 'reading wars'' ; Washington Post.com;

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/09/17/another-blast-in-the-reading-wars/>

[7] Goodman, Kenneth with Yetta Goodman, "Twenty Questions about Teaching Language," Educational Leadership, March 1981, Vol. 38:6, pp. 437-42. (The Goodman quote is available on page 30 of the book, WAR Against the School's Academic Child Abuse by Siegfried Engelmann, Halcyon House Publisher 1992 SBN 0-89420-287-1)

Dear Rep. Pridemore:

Thank you for hearing me speak at the hearing in Wausau yesterday. Your apparent surprise at the information that the Common Core ELA Standards contain literacy standards for teaching literacy in other academic areas made it clear that you have not actually taken the time to look at the standards yourself. For your reference, I have included a screen shot of the Common Core ELA webpage that shows the subjects addressed therein:



Please consider visiting the website yourself, so that you are actually familiar with the standards about which you will be making impactful decisions. Here is the link:
<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>

Thank you for your time and attention (or disturbing lack thereof) to this matter.

Sincerely,
Yedda Ligocki

I listened to Dr Stotsky's presentation in Fond du Lac. Her testimony about her participation on the validation committee convinced me Common Core was not what Evers claims. The standards are NOT rigorous. The standards are not internationally bench marked. The standards are not based on research. There is no research to support writing over reading OR informational reading over literary study.

This is not what I want for our children. Stop Common Core. What is the rush. Is this just another No Child Left Behind? Are we doing this for the money OR our children? Why are other states saying NO?

marylynne.rasmussen@gmail.com

Mary Lynne Rasmussen

1010 Alpine Ct

Oshkosh, WI 54901

oppose common core

parts@vanhornchev.com

RICK KREJCAREK

W2468 BIG BEN ROAD

EDEN , WI. 53019

I do not support the common core agenda and urge you to vote against it. Extreme centralization of our Education system will not serve the needs of the public properly and forcing private schools to adopt this curriculum will further hinder a parent's right to choose what their children are taught.

khenslin@tds.com

Kathy Henslin

n7702 Sandy beach road

Fond du lac

Opposed to Common Core standardization and the lowering of SAT and ACT
treating qualifications. We are not stupid. I resent the government's attempt
to make us so.

mama2wlb@gmail.com

J. M. Horn

521 W 16th Ave.

Oshkosh, WI. 54902

I oppose Common Core. Wisconsin taxpayers deserve to have a voice in the curricula administered to our kids, and Common Core will undermine local control which is supposedly protected by law. Common Core standards for secondary education lacks rigor, and will leave our kids unprepared for life.

roscopicosh@yahoo.com

David Myrick

613 Mason Street

Oshkosh, WI 54902

I oppose the common core agenda. Please do not take control of our education away from parents and local school districts.

cmbeal@centurytel.net

Chantelle Beal

4367 Stoney Ridge Trail

Oshkosh, WI 54904

All that I have read and heard about Common Core have gone against my beliefs and common sense. Therefore I oppose implementing it in any form whatsoever.

claytonwell@yahoo.com

Clayton A. Wellman

730 Pine St. Apt.6

Omro

I OPPOSE this and hope you will do the same.

ljreischl@gmail.com

Lois Reischl

625 Reichow St.

Oshkosh, WI 54902

| |
|--|
| Oppose common Core |
| cklein730@gmail.com |
| chris |
| klein |
| menasha wi 54952 |

I am against Common Core for our state. I believe we need to look at the Mass. and Indiana standards and glean a Wisconsin Standard. CC doesn't help Inner city schools that pull our numbers down. After hearing Dr. Stotsky's intellectual testimony compared to the testimony of the little group of teachers from Madison that just took some notes and did not document findings related to international comparisons, I realized that the Madison group had no idea what they were talking about. As a Speech Therapist, I have worked with educators and know how they enjoy throwing around their "education jargon" to try to impress listeners. I was so taken by the clarity and common sense of Dr. Stotsky in Fond du lac, that I implore you to listen to her final statement--cut your losses and devise your own. With Common Core, there is no more need of school boards, or any local control at all; and that is scary.

wgneenah@yahoo.com

Wanda Graham

3217 Fondotto Drive

Neenah, WI 54956

I would be against the Common Core criteria. Simply because the Federal government has no business dictating to the states educational doctrine. It up to the states and local school boards. Also the common core does not teach the truth as it seems to me to be soft prpoganda

cte81198@centurytel.net

Wayne Katur

6125 Cty Rd N

Pickett WI

I oppose common cre

jpetek@lsawing.com

John Petek

3845 shorebird ct

Oshkosh, wi

Legislators:

I attended the Wausau hearing yesterday but was unable to stay to give my statement. I was surprised that so much time was given to out-of-state "experts." I didn't realize that would be the case.

I did update my comments to address the Eighth-Grade Algebra issue that was raised.

My statement is attached. Thanks for considering it!

--

Bill Fehrenbach
Math Coordinator
Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools

bill.fehrenbach@wrps.net
715.424.6721 x1059

Dear Legislators:

Thank you for this opportunity. I am a **high school math teacher** and also serve as the **district K-12 math coordinator** for the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools, and I wanted to give you my perspective on the Common Core Math Standards, which we have been using for several years now in the Rapids district. In fact, I stopped calling them “Common Core” a while ago—now I just refer to them as “**our math standards**”. It doesn’t really matter to us how they got here. These are the standards set forth for us by the Wisconsin DPI. They are our standards.

I had heard two general concerns about our standards that I can address. One is that they are **not rigorous enough**. We certainly **haven’t found that to be true**. At the secondary level, we are finding it a challenge to address all of the standards in three years of high school math. It is especially challenging to determine where the Probability and Statistics standards should be taught in the sequence of Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2. At the elementary level, teachers have experienced having to teach some topics that they have not taught before at their grade level—in many cases, the topics are taught the year prior to where taught previously. Certainly, our elementary teachers seem to be challenging our students to greater math achievement.

After attending the session yesterday, I also understand that **8th-Grade Algebra** is an issue for some once again. The CCSSM document clearly addresses that in Appendix A. It provides a sequence for teaching Algebra 1 in Grade 8 that also involves the Grade 7 standards. Appendix A also offers options for a 4-year traditional sequence and a 4-year integrated sequence. The standards allow for the flexibility for local districts to apply whichever model works for them. Here’s my perspective. Algebra in Grade 8 is great *for the students who are ready*. However, many students are not ready for a full-year rigorous Algebra course in Grade 8, regardless of standards. If unprepared students take Algebra in Grade 8, we’ve found that they often struggle there *and in Algebra 2 as sophomores*. They often get frustrated and end up dropping math before their senior year in high school. (We have too much of that in our district!) Students who take Algebra in Grade 8 should see it through to taking Calculus in high school. Otherwise, we’ve found that students are better off taking the regular Grade 8 math course to strengthen their foundational math skills. They are more likely to get through Precalculus in high school that way. Many of the “accelerated” students end up stopping after Algebra 2. **Early Algebra is not always better! The Eighth-Grade Algebra issue is a separate issue, not a Common Core issue.**

The other concern I’ve heard is the **loss of “local control”**. **As math teachers, we have always taught to a set of standards**. The DPI has always had its state math standards, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics has guiding documents, colleges have their own opinions about the high school math curriculum, as do agencies representing business and industry and the STEM initiative. We do our best to teach our students so that they are prepared for whatever path they choose. We don’t feel any less control over the curriculum now than at any other time.

Our new math standards are particularly good in their “Process Standards.” **The Process Standards focus on *how we teach and how students learn, not merely on the content we teach, the *what****. The standards have helped us all take a closer look at our practice and have helped us improve the quality of our math instruction. If teachers hadn’t gotten it before, they certainly have had a fresh reminder of the importance of modeling mathematics in the classroom, communicating mathematically, and using real-world math applications in their teaching.

Our district has just gone through acquisition of new elementary math materials. We chose a new math series that is closely aligned with the new standards. Our teachers and students love it! **To change math standards again now would be very wasteful of the time, effort, and expense we have invested in the new standards—and it just wouldn’t make sense to me.**

Bill Fehrenbach
Math Teacher
K-12 Math Coordinator
Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools

Oppose Common Core

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Tate Struve

N7342 Birch Point Drive

Plymouth, WI

Common Core: I volunteer at Parkside school 2 days a week. The students at that school are from very mixed backgrounds. One class has 6 children whose first language is not English. How do you expect these students to learn the same way as students in Whitefish Bay, Brookfield, etc. The teachers know best how to teach these students, not someone in Madison. I know we are behind several other countries in education. Are they as large? and, if they are, do they educate all their youth.

Why do some universities, such as the University of Pennsylvania accept more women than men and why are a very large number of these women Asian?. Why is an eastern college planning on opening a branch in an Asian country?

I think every state is different and should handle the education of their students the way that that is best for them. Let's concentrate on OUR state.

dledgarton@charter.net

Liz Edgarton

N7928 Brookhaven Beach Rd.

Fond du Lac WI, 54937

Common Core is unconstitutional as it is a federal program. Education is a local matter that must remain accountable to local school boards. A parent must have the right to confront any educator about the curriculum that is being taught in person. Also, there is no need for the data mining that is part of this program. The results from the state of Kentucky are abysmal for their math. Wisconsin children do not need to be dumbed down like they would if this is implemented. Lastly, if this program was so great why was it kept quiet and out of scrutiny from the public's knowledge? I vote to get rid of it. Thank you

jredemann@new.rr.com

Jeff Redemann

1317 Jackson St.

Oshkosh/WI/54901

I strongly oppose Common Core.

sa_helmer@yahoo.com

Sallie Helmer

611 Park St.

Ripon, WI 54971

I am a School Board member (28 years) in Berlin. I am very concerned about the Adgenda of the Common Core curriculum . I don't want our students In Berlin to be taught the values of this current administration or the left coast.

I am against common core and want districts to have local control.

sue@haase.me

Sue Haase

W413 County Rd. D

Berlin, WI. 54923

Oppose Common Care

nckrahn@bugnet.net

Caroline Krahn

22822 Cty Rd K

Brillion, Wi, 54110

I OPPOSE common core. I feel our WI teachers and school systems do an excellent job already and need the freedom to adjust parts of the curriculum to address current topics and stay relevant. The federal government cannot do better for our kids' education than our local school districts.

khnewport@yahoo.com

Kim Everson

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Van Dyne

OPPOSE common core

dmrinke@yahoo.com

Denise Rinke

210 Cottrell Dr.

Saukville, WI

I oppose common core.

blustb@charter.net

Burleigh Blust

5060 Lake Rd.

Oshkosh/WI/54902

<http://eagnews.org/new-york-teachers-condemn-common-core-approved-book-as-pornographic/>

<http://eagnews.org/worksheet-new-york-students-pretend-to-be-heroin-users-to-set-personal-budget/>

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2013/10/23/second-graders-taught-labor-politics-in-core-curriculum-aligned-lesson-plan/>

Rep. Thiesfeldt and Sen. Farrow,

As leaders of the committee to review Common Core, please look to New York's experience as the pilot state.

Some would argue that no books should be banned from school libraries. However, if you polled the parents of Wisconsin

I am sure the vast majority would suggest that such materials belong in a library for adults, not persons under 18.

Thank you.

Gayle Marshall
Weston, WI

I am wondering as a concerned parent what is now happening with common core issues. I appreciate all you have done with the hearings here in WI, but what now ? What more can we do if anything a a parent?

Thank you

Lori holland

Thehollands1@hotmail.com

Lori holland

W2627 gopher hill rd

Watertown wi 53094

Dear Rep. Thiesfeldt,

Just a short note to let you know that I, who am just a parent of 4 kiddos, donated money to allow speakers like Dr. Gary Thompson to speak AGAINST Common Core here in Wisconsin. It is very important to me that our school system does not adopt Common Core Standards. It was important to me to have wonderful speakers come to Wausau to speak against Common Core as I could not be there. Just an FYI for you...Thank You, A Mom against Common Core Standards

encmares@aol.com

Erin Mares

2238 Sunrise Dr

Appleton, WI, 54914

Sir:

There needs to be a hearing in Milwaukee concerning the Common Core Standards. The city has a grant from the GE Foundation that has resulted in, among other benefits, more than 80,000 hours of training for teachers and is now helping to fund 10 MPS schools, which are being developed into models for utilizing the Common Core. It seems to me that if you are truly looking for input into the use of these standards, you shouldn't disregard the experience and expertise of the Milwaukeans who are involved in this.

Sincerely,

Tracy Thiel

3437 N. Murray Avenue

Milwaukee, WI 53211

Totally oppose!!

linda.milliren@new.rr.com

Linda Milliren

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Neenah, WI 54956