

Debunking Myths About Common Core

REASONS COMMON CORE IS DEFICIENT IN MATH AND ENGLISH

- Participation by states is NOT voluntary. If CCSS is voluntary and state-driven, why would the federal government use financial rewards to “coerce” state boards of education to adopt CCSS? These “carrots” have been in the form of Race to the Top funds and selective waivers from some of the No Child Left Behind requirements to entice states to adopt CCSS — as well as threats to end Title I funding if states did not adopt Common Core.
- Common Core does NOT guarantee better quality of education and better results. (*Adapted from letter titled “Common Core” by Gary Palmer, Alabama Policy Institute, 9/23/11*)
 - Common Core standards are almost indistinguishable from the old standards they replace.
 - **Common Core will not improve educational outcomes, but it will nationalize mediocrity and stifle innovation.**
 - IF there is anything in Common Core that would improve education outcomes in Alabama, the state board of education could incorporate those standards into our state education requirements without having to participate in and subjugating our state sovereignty to the federal program and without having to spend hundreds of millions of dollars when teachers are being laid off, there’s no money for textbooks or class supplies, and class sizes were recently increased due to budget cutbacks, and the state is asking citizens to approve a constitutional amendment to raid Alabama and Education rainy day trust funds to transfer over \$400 million to Medicaid and the general fund.
 - **A recent report “Alabama Leads the Nation in Reading Gains, Meets National Average” shows that Alabama is doing better WITHOUT Common Core Standards** and Reading Scores increased 13 points from 2003-2011.
<http://www.afrw.org> (click on Common Core)
 - Many teachers agree that CCSS has lower standards than Alabama’s current standards which are from A- to B+, according to Fordham Institute.
 - **Parental involvement will be diminished. One popular proponent of CCSS has even suggested the elimination of local school boards.**
- Common Core Math and English are NOT better than standards of other states. (*Adapted from a white paper written by Dr. Sandra Stotsky and Ze’ev Wurman. Rick McLain summarized a few of the qualitative and quantitative reasons why Common Core standards are DEFICIENT when compared to other standards already in place by other states.*) Their document “Common Core Still Doesn’t Make The Grade” can be read at <http://www.afrw.org>.

CREDENTIALS OF DR. SANDRA STOTSKY

DR. SANDRA STOTSKY: Holds the Endowed Chair in Teacher Quality at the University of Arkansas and “served on the National Validations Committee for the Common Core State Systemic Initiative (2009-2010) and on the National Mathematics Advisory Panel (2006-2008), co-authoring its final report as well as two of its task group reports. She also served on the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (2006-2010).” <http://www.uark.edu/ua/der/People/stotsky.html>

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More Reasons Common Core Is Deficient & Should Be Repealed

- Common Core Math and English are NOT better than standards. (Continued from previous page)

___ Here's a short list of deficiencies as found by Stotsky and Wurman:

- 1. CCS defers division to grade 6 while other states recommend grade 5.**
2. CCS fails to build on money to introduce decimal fractions early.
- 3. CCS neglects development of flexibility with fraction representations.**
4. CCS provides no material on teaching and using least common denominators beyond the simple multiplication of denominators.
- 5. CCS fails to teach prime factorization at any grade level.**
6. Common Core's preparation for Algebra I falls a year or two behind the standards in California and high-achieving nations.
- 7. Compared with content of the standards in CA and MA for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, the content of Common Core's standards for these three basic courses shows low academic expectations for its definition of "college readiness."**
8. CCS replaces the traditional Euclidean foundations of school geometry with an experimental approach to the study of middle and high school geometry that has not been widely used elsewhere in the world, or considered effective where it was tried out.
- 9. Common Core's high school standards fall well short of those in California and in Massachusetts 2011 and 2010 in specificity of literary and cultural content. By adopting Common Core's standards for their own, CA and MA significantly weaken the intellectual demands on students in the areas of language and literature.**
10. By grade 8 CCS' mathematics standards are a year or two behind the National Mathematics Advisory Panel's recommendations, leading states, and our international competitors.
- 11. Common Core's mathematics standards miss chunks of content recommended by the National Mathematics Advisory Panel for K-8 and inexplicably leave large holes in mathematics content currently in the high school curriculum.**
12. Common Core standards may lead to fewer high school students prepared for authentic college-level work.
- 13. None of the CCS objectives on phonics and word analysis skills in grades K-3 expects students to apply these skills both in context and independent of context to ensure mastery of decoding skills. Only in grades 4 and 5 are students expected to read accurately unfamiliar words "in context and out of context." This standard needs to be in the primary grades as well. Its placement at only grades 4 and 5 badly misinforms reading teachers in the primary grades.**
14. Nonfiction or informational reading has been weighted more than imaginative literature in ELA at all grade levels — with ten standards for the former and nine for the latter at all grade levels (not just at the elementary level). This proportion augurs a drastic decline in literary study in 6-12.
- 15. CCS only promotes study of American literature in grades 11 & 12. it is not mentioned in earlier grades where it would be appropriate (e.g., American folktales, American tall tales).**

For more information on Common Core, visit <http://www.afrw.org>,
<http://www.truthinamericaneducation.com>, <http://www.wetumpkateaparty.com>,
<http://www.eagleforum.org>, http://www.alabamapolicy.org/viewpoints/article.php?id_art=477

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Still More Reasons Common Core Is Deficient & Should Be Repealed

- Common Core Math and English are NOT better than standards. (Continued from previous page)
 - 16. The “college and career readiness anchor standards” governing the grade-level standards are not as a group internationally benchmarked or supported by research evidence or scholarship. There is no evidence for the effectiveness of a skills-based framework for grade-level standards. The ten CCRAS for Reading are organized under a incoherent group of categories.**
 17. CCS do not address the use of established criteria for evaluating formal and informal talks, presentations, or speeches.
 - 18. CCS do not clearly distinguish modes of organization from structural elements of an expository text and misinform elementary teachers.**
 19. Although the vocabulary standards highlight specific figures of speech and rhetorical devices, they do not teach dictionary skills through the grades, use of glossaries for discipline-specific terms, and some kinds of words that must be taught (e.g., foreign words used in written English that do not appear in an English language dictionary). Common Core leans heavily on use of context to determine the meaning of unknown words but provides no standards on different ways to teach use of context for this purpose. In addition, one key standard contains an inaccurate description and examples of the difference between the connotative and denotative meaning of a word.
 - 20. Most literature standards lack examples of authors, works, literary traditions, and literary periods. Only a few standards indicate specific cultural content (at grades 11-12) and only a few examples are given.**
 21. Common Core’s relatively content-empty reading and literature standards cannot lead by themselves to a common core of high academic expectations.
 - 22. Both California and Massachusetts expect students to reach fluency with multiplication using the standard algorithm by grade 4, and fluency with division using the standard algorithm by grade 5. In contrast, Common Core expects fluency with multiplication using the standard algorithm by grade 5, and fluency with division using the standard algorithm by grade 4.**
 23. Both California and Massachusetts require memorization of addition facts to 20 in grade 1, while Common Core expects memorization to 18 by grade 2.

CREDENTIALS OF MR. ZE’EV WURMAN

ZE’EV WURMAN: Mr. Wurman “was a member of the 2010 California Academic Content Standards Commission that evaluated the suitability of Common Core’s standards for California. He was a member of the Teaching Mathematics Advisory Panel to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Between 2007 and 2009 Wurman served as a Senior Policy Adviser to the Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development in the U.S. Department of Education. Wurman has B.Sc. And M.Sc. Degrees in Electrical Engineering from the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology.”

<http://mathexperts-ga.blogspot.com/2011/04/math-experts-q-with-zeev-wurman.html>