



StopCommonCore.com

What is the Common Core?

Educators have described it as No Child Left Behind on steroids! Parents describe it as a nationalized “one-size-fits-all” approach to content standards that creates a low ceiling for student achievement. In layman’s terms, the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) is a set of national K-12 content standards, currently in math and English Language Arts, which were developed primarily by a nonprofit called Achieve, Inc., in Washington, D.C. under the auspices of two trade associations, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The Common Core was developed without state legislative authority and is a mandate of Race to the Top.

Common Core: Centralized Education Without Representation or Parental Input

Georgia taxpayers pay approximately \$13 billion per year in state and local taxes for K-12 education, yet they are still losing local control. The Common Core guarantees taxpayers and parents NO VOICE in math and English content standards of this state and thus no control over what children will learn in these subjects. Parents will have no chance to protect their children from poor or harmful content, and there will be no one in Georgia for them to turn to in order to implement content changes. All control over the standards will rest with anonymous interests in Washington, D.C. Even if the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) has a “seat at the table” when the standards are evaluated and revised, Georgia will not have control.

Common Core: Intrusive Data Tracking leads to Career Tracking

The Common Core ensures that the states build expensive high-tech systems that will track student performance and other personal data and provide that information to the federal government. “Hopefully, some day, we can track children from preschool to high school and from high school to college and college to career.” - *U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, from a June 8, 2009 speech*

Personal student data – including academic achievement, health history, disciplinary records, and much more – will be collected and (according to the federal government’s plan) shared with other agencies and private entities without parental knowledge or authority. In Georgia, this data collection combined with the Common Core standards will then help support the newly implemented career-cluster scheme. No later than the ninth grade, children will be steered into one of 17 predetermined career clusters. Such early tracking may stifle the hidden talents and dreams of youth and create an employment caste system of lost opportunities.

Common Core: Exorbitant Price Tag

The unfunded mandates associated with the Common Core are open-ended in areas such as professional development, new textbooks and instructional materials, testing, and data-tracking systems. A recent study shows implementation will cost \$16 billion or more nationwide, with about 90 percent of this paid for by states and local districts, despite the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top grants. The Common Core fuels a money pot of tax dollars going to pre-selected vendors. And every dollar spent for Common Core implementation is one less available for arts programs, sports programs, and other school activities.

Where Things Stand

In Georgia – State School Superintendent Kathy Cox and Governor Sonny Perdue committed Georgia to the Common Core upon signing the Race to the Top grant application in January 2010. In July 2010 the State Board of Education officially adopted the Common Core, only one month after the content standards were released in English Language Arts and math. In the fall of 2010, Georgia agreed to become a “governing state” of the PARCC assessment consortium, meaning Georgia will implement these tests starting in 2014-15, though the tests are yet unseen and their costs unknown. In addition, the State is revamping graduation requirements to comply with the grant’s College-and-Career Readiness Standards, which is another term for the Common Core, just used in a different context. Current State School Superintendent John Barge campaigned against Race to the Top, but upon taking office, he embraced it and the Common Core.

Sub-standard Standards of the Common Core

English Language Arts (ELA) Standards – Dr. Sandra Stotsky of the University of Arkansas served on the Common Core Validation Committee but refused to sign off on the ELA standards because of poor quality, empty skill sets, the de-emphasis on literature, and low reading levels, such as 8th grade levels for 12th grade students. Even the Fordham Institute – a Common Core proponent -- gave Georgia’s current ELA standards higher marks than the Common Core.

Math Standards – Dr. James Milgram of Stanford University, the only mathematician on the Common Core Validation Committee, refused to sign off, stating, “It’s almost a joke to think students [who master the common standards] would be ready for math at a university.”

Next on the Common Core Agenda – Expect the feds to aggressively push adoption of national standards in science and social studies.

Take Action

Tell your legislators to stop Race to the Top mandates and the Common Core. Get connected at www.stopcommoncore.com.