



# ISSUE BRIEF

## Common Core State Standards: FRC Position

*Sarah Perry*

- 1. The children of this nation belong first to their parents and families, not to their communities or governments.** The primary authority over and direction of a child's education lies with that child's parent or guardian.
- 2. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were created without benefit of transparency, by a non-profit organization, with the involvement of very few educators, and majority funded and influenced by corporate interests.** Democratic participation, educator input, and opportunity for revision during the "closed door" development of the Standards were utterly lacking. The Standards were introduced and later adopted without benefit of field testing, and multiple members of the Standards validation committee refused to approve them.
- 3. The CCSS "dumb down" the teaching of America's students by emphasizing "perspectives" and "critical thinking" over content and facts.** The CCSS utilize uniform standards that not only eliminate more advanced material from previous teaching curriculums, but also prohibit teachers from teaching students individually and instead promotes a "one size fits all" approach to teaching. CCSS also lower the standards of higher-performing states in order to align educational content and testing to the CCSS.
- 4. The CCSS Initiative represents a massive and dangerous overreach on the part of the Federal government.** The principle of states' rights is outlined in the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which states that any powers not delegated to the federal government are granted to the states. Education is best accomplished when it is left to local communities, parents, teachers, and states.
- 5. The CCSS Initiative has resulted in, and will continue to result in, an exodus and demoralization of the nation's experienced educators.** With the elimination of teacher creativity in content and approach, the CCSS shifted the delivery of education from teachers to technology, with test scores serving as the ultimate standard of educational success.<sup>1</sup>
- 6. The CCSS will push low-income, minority, and disabled children onto vocational tracks, and will establish a test-based meritocracy.** Without the opportunity for individualization of education, and a national disparity of resources from child to child, disadvantaged children will not benefit from either the uniformity of the CCSS, or the renewed emphasis on standardized testing as research shows test scores are heavily influenced by socioeconomic status.<sup>2</sup>
- 7. The CCSS are costing billions to implement, and the costs will be borne by local school districts.** New technology, new teaching materials, increased bandwidth for testing, and teacher training have and will cost taxpayers approximately \$15 billion dollars over an anticipated implementation timeline of seven years, and will necessarily defer other education expenditures.<sup>3</sup>

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**8. The CCSS are developmentally inappropriate for young children.** No one with experience in the field of early childhood development was involved in the drafting of the standards, and more than 500 early childhood educators have signed a statement saying the CCSS emphasize academic skills and testing over imaginative play, while requiring children to make sophisticated leaps in reasoning that they are not capable of at young ages.<sup>4,5</sup>

**9. The CCSS promote an equivalence of worldviews and moral ambiguity that may disrespect the faith, traditions, or upbringing of students.** The CCSS promote a progressive, liberal narrative of the world, not only as a result of their being the creation of a massive and centralized educational approach, but also by way of the materials deemed “core-approved,” and which are, in the words of the Standards drafters themselves, designed to “broaden worldviews.”<sup>6,7</sup>

**10. The CCSS lack a system of oversight or correction.** The CCSS do not answer questions about what to do with students who fail standardized assessments, give no direction as to how to police the division of informational and fictional texts in high school, and make no provision for how to fix problems or revise the standards.

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#### Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> Arne Duncan, “Beyond the Bubble Tests: The Next Generation of Assessments -- Secretary Arne Duncan's Remarks to State Leaders at Achieve's American Diploma Project Leadership Team Meeting,” U.S. Department of Education, September 2, 2010, accessed April 22, 2014, <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/beyond-bubble-tests-next-generation-assessments-secretary-arne-duncans-remarks-state-l>.

<sup>2</sup> Valerie Strauss, “Everything You Need to Know About Common Core – Ravitch,” *Washington Post*, January 18, 2011, accessed April 22, 2014, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/01/18/everything-you-need-to-know-about-common-core-ravitch/?tid=pm\\_local\\_pop](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/01/18/everything-you-need-to-know-about-common-core-ravitch/?tid=pm_local_pop).

<sup>3</sup> Perry Chiaramonte, “High Costs of Common Core Has States Rethinking the National Education Standards,” Fox News, February 5, 2014, accessed April 22, 2014, <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2014/02/05/number-states-backing-out-common-core-testing-maryland-schools-low-on-funding/>.

<sup>4</sup> Barry Garelick, “A New Kind of Problem: The Common Core Math Standards,” November 20, 2012, accessed April 22, 2014, <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/11/a-new-kind-of-problem-the-common-core-math-standards/265444/>.

<sup>5</sup> Rick Santorum, “The Troubles with Common Core,” Townhall.com, April 21, 2014, accessed April 22, 2014, <http://townhall.com/columnists/ricksantorum/2014/04/21/the-troubles-with-common-core-n1826204>.

<sup>6</sup> Correlation of Scholastic R.E.A.L. to the Common Core State Standard Initiatives for English Language Arts, Scholastic, accessed April 22, 2014, <http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/face-new/pdf/real/realccss.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> English Language Arts Programs, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, accessed April 22, 2014, <http://www.hmhco.com/educators/education-topics/by-topic/common-core/ela-programs>.