



## StopCommonCore.com

### What is the Common Core?

Educators have described it as No Child Left Behind on steroids! In layman's terms, the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) is a set of national K-12 standards developed primarily by a nonprofit called Achieve, Inc., in Washington, D.C. under the auspices of the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The Common Core was developed without state legislative authority.

### Common Core: Centralized Educational Control Destroys Federalism

By hooking states into the Common Core with Race-to-the-Top grant funds and linking the Common Core to No Child Left Behind waivers, the federal government is acting as the "enforcer" to herd states into the "one-size-fits-all" Common Core -- in spite of the fact that three federal laws prohibit the federal government from guiding the educational curriculum of the states. Not only the U.S. Constitution, but state constitutions maintain that education is a power reserved to the states and their citizens. Yet, the Common Core can not be changed by state legislatures or state school boards.

### Common Core: Education Without Representation or Parental Input

Georgia taxpayers pay approximately \$13 billion per year in state and local taxes for K-12 education. Yet, 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. In fact, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) agreed to implement the Common Core before the standards were even released. GaDOE eventually had a seat at the table, but input was limited to offering suggestions that could be either accepted or dismissed by those in control of the standards.

### Common Core: Intrusive Data 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

### 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.

## Where Things Stand

**In the Nation** – Only a few states have turned a cold shoulder to the federal grants and waivers requiring Common Core.

- Texas, Nebraska, and Alaska refused to participate.
- Indiana's Senate Education Committee voted to delay implementation of the Common Core until after it was reviewed by a study committee.
- South Carolina has legislation pending to pull out of the Common Core supported by the Governor.
- Virginia has pulled out of the Common Core, and Minnesota has refused to sign on to the math portion.
- Utah is holding legislative hearings on withdrawing from Common Core.
- South Dakota has slowed down the implementation of the Common Core with the passage of a bill that requires public hearings around the state.

**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. 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 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels for 12<sup>th</sup> 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, just as they have in English and math.

## Take Action

Tell your legislators to stop Race to the Top mandates and the Common Core. Get connected at [www.stopcommoncore.com](http://www.stopcommoncore.com).