

COMMON CORE — TALKING POINTS

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Introduction:

- [Arne Duncan](#)¹, Secretary of Education under President Obama, recently [revealed](#)² his biases:
 1. Problems in the education system are race and class based.
 2. Push back is from “white suburban moms” who want to think that their children are “brilliant.”
 3. The only way to save the unsophisticated masses is a federal government take-over of education.
- Common Core is “No Child Left Behind” on [steroids](#)³
- Common Core uses untested standards and corporate sponsors’ products.
- Common Core [doubles down](#)⁴ on “No Child Left Behind.”
- Common Core is the [end of state sovereignty](#)⁵ over education
- Common Core is education [without representation](#)⁶.
- Common Core is being called [“ObamaCore.”](#)⁷
- People like [Linda Darling Hammond](#)⁸ helped put this together (Leftist radical was endorsed for education secretary by Bill Ayers and was an advisor for the Obama Campaign).

Background:

- Formal name: [Common Core](#)⁹ State Standards Initiative (CCSI)
- Nationalized K-12 standards
 - [Began](#)¹⁰ with private, progressive educational insiders in DC – feds imposed it on states by tying the acceptance of Common Core as a condition to receive “Race to the Top” grants or waivers for “No Child Left Behind.”
 - Established primarily by [Achieve, INC](#)¹¹ in Washington, DC – progressive education reformers
 - [Funded](#)¹² primarily by Bill and Melinda Gates
 - Added at the last minute to give the [appearance](#)¹³ of state [involvement](#)¹⁴ were two trade associations headquartered in DC -- the National Governors Association and the Council of State School Officers
 - Developed without [state legislative](#)¹⁵ involvement or authority.
 - Lacked involvement of [teachers](#)¹⁶ except for review after-the-fact, expecting rubberstamp.

- US Department of Education [deeply involved](#)¹⁷ – Hundreds of millions of dollars into [consortia](#)¹⁸ building the tests.
- [Never voted on](#)¹⁹ — implemented primarily by federal bribes— to the tune of [\\$4.3 billion](#)²⁰.
- [Too many](#)²¹ consultants and educational entrepreneurs and not enough practical, teacher and parental in-put.
- Glaring [corruption](#)²², conflicts of interests and mutually-beneficial relationships.
- [National](#)²³ curriculum, designed by unaccountable entities in DC.
- [Numerous](#)²⁴ educators declare that this [“one size fits all”](#)²⁵ plan won’t fix the US educational deficits.

SPECIFIC PROBLEMS (See excellent chart [summarizing](#)²⁶):

1. Federal [Take-Over](#)²⁷ of Education – [links together](#)²⁸ “race to the top” grant funds and “no child left behind” waivers so that the [federal government](#)²⁹ becomes the “enforcer” [forcing states](#)³⁰ into Common Core.
 - It was essentially a [bribe](#)³¹ to states – couldn’t get waivers for No child left behind without adopting CCSSI.
 - [Three federal laws](#)³² prohibit the [federal government](#)³³ from overriding the educational curriculum of the various states.
 - The [US Constitution](#)³⁴ AND state constitutions reserve [power to the states](#)³⁵ to set educational standards.
 - Common Core [cannot be changed](#)³⁶ by state legislatures or state school boards.

2. Lacks [Parental input](#)³⁷ or representation – while tax funds underwrite the billions of dollar expense of schools, neither taxpayers nor [parents](#)³⁸ have a voice in the content standards of their local schools. Many are using [social media](#)³⁹ as an [outlet](#)⁴⁰ for their complaints.
 - Parents will have [no say-so](#)⁴¹/no control over what their children learn in any subject.
 - Common Core doesn’t address the necessity for [parental involvement](#)⁴² for success in school.
 - [Opposition](#)⁴³ from [teachers](#)⁴⁴, parents and taxpayers is [bipartisan](#)⁴⁵. [Read the hundreds of [responses](#)⁴⁶ to an NAE article defending Common Core.]

3. [Data Tracking](#)⁴⁷ is Intrusive and [comprehensive](#)⁴⁸ – expensive high-tech systems will [track student](#)⁴⁹ performance, progress and other [personal data](#)⁵⁰ and provide that information to the federal government.
 - Arne Duncan [said in 2009](#)⁵¹: “Hopefully, some day, we can track children from preschool to high school and from high school to college and college to career.”

- Like in the Stimulus bill in 2009, to get desperately-needed dollars, states have to build [massive student databases](#)⁵².
 - Student [privacy](#)⁵³ – indeed, [family privacy](#)⁵⁴ – could become a relic of the past.
 - [System](#)⁵⁵ contains over [400 data points](#)⁵⁶ – academic performance to discipline history, family income, religious affiliation, health history, etc. AND THIS CAN BE [SHARED](#)⁵⁷ WITH RESEARCHERS, PRIVATE AND [PUBLIC](#)⁵⁸ ENTITIES (Just has to show an “audit or evaluation” goal).
 - The Department of Education has “[unilaterally knocked down](#)⁵⁹ federal privacy protections” through Common Core.
4. The cost is exorbitant -- There are numerous open-ended [unfunded mandates](#)⁶⁰ associated with Common Core ([including](#)⁶¹ professional development, new textbooks and instructional materials, testing, and data-tracking systems).
- A recent study [calculates cost](#)⁶² at \$16 billion nationwide. 90% paid by states and local districts (despite the \$4.35 billion Race-to-the-Top Grants)
 - There is a slush fund of tax dollars designated for pre-selected vendors.
 - Costs of implementation will dwarf any federal grants awarded for adopting CCSS
5. There are [major problems](#)⁶³ associated with the sub-standard standards – [lack rigor](#)⁶⁴
- [Three-hundred](#)⁶⁵ prominent educators and policy-makers warn about Common Core discouraging innovation.
 - [Three of the five](#)⁶⁶ experts on the validation committee refused to sign off on Common Core.
 - Dr. Sandra Stotsky – foremost English expert gave CCSS a D grade. The English Language Arts Standards were described as having poor quality, empty skill sets, de-emphasis on literature, low reading levels, doesn't each [critical thinking](#),⁶⁷ etc.
 - [Fordham Institute](#)⁶⁸ (a proponent) admitted some states already exceed the CCSS standards.
 - The only Math expert on the panel refused to sign off on CCSS calling it a [“joke.”](#)⁶⁹
 - All CCSS [standards are non-negotiable](#)⁷⁰ by states – follow word-by-word.
 - CCSS standards [drive curriculum](#)⁷¹ content
 - Critics say it teaches [“empty skill sets”](#)⁷² -- about 7th grade level for HS graduation.
 - Students will be placed on a [“track” at an early age](#)⁷³-- college v. vocational

- Students don't learn literary and cultural foundation necessary for [authentic education](#)⁷⁴ – 60% of the [classical literature](#)⁷⁵ has been removed from curriculum.
 - Prepares for [low-level community college](#)⁷⁶ and vocational training (not 4-year College).
6. Partisan Politics masquerades as school lessons.
- Goal – [produce “workers”](#)⁷⁷ who can “compete in the global economy.”
 - Text includes [propaganda](#)⁷⁸ as sentences to teach grammar and math.
 - Text includes examples full of [racial and class](#)⁷⁹ propaganda and [anti-American sentiments](#).⁸⁰
 - Opportunities for [“political indoctrination”](#)⁸¹ abound in Common Core.
 - [Parents](#)⁸² are shocked to find [inappropriate left-wing notions](#)⁸³, disinformation, distortion and disparagement of American exceptionalism and opportunity.
 - CCSSI [indoctrinates](#);⁸⁴ it does [not educate](#)⁸⁵.
 - Goal is to [train students for jobs](#)⁸⁶, not educate them to be thoughtful citizens.
 - English assignment – [Barbara Ehrenreich’s](#)⁸⁷ anti-capitalist tract “Nickel and Dimed” or Photo essays from a newspaper. [See [leftist making fun of](#)⁸⁸ parents objecting to such materials.]
 - [“Informational texts”](#)⁸⁹ (read: leftist political propaganda) are recommended over “creative or classical literature.”
 - Indoctrination into [compliance](#)⁹⁰; discourage thinking for themselves.
 - Critics explain that students become more literate when they are taught to [love reading](#)⁹¹.
 - President Obama has [announced](#)⁹² his plan to pay teachers directly by creating a “Master Teacher Corps.”
 - Some critics say the goal is PROGRESSIVE UTOPIA – managed economy with trained workers [not educated citizens](#)⁹³ (capable of thinking critically and independently).

Where Things Stand:

- [45 states](#)⁹⁴, DC and four US territories and the Department of Defense Educational Activity have all built their curriculum from CCSSI.
- As reality is coming to light, [15 states](#)⁹⁵ are withdrawing and refusing to participate
 - Maneuvers are afoot -- including refusing to participate – in Texas, Nebraska, Alaska, Indiana, South Carolina, Virginia, Utah, South Dakota
 - [Movements building](#)⁹⁶ in Colorado, Georgia, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire.

- Feds are aggressively [pushing](#)⁹⁷ adoption of national standards in science and social studies (like they pushed in English and Math).
- Others are pushing to add “civic education,” calling for a [C3 program](#)⁹⁸ (career, college, citizenship)
- National [educational commentators](#)⁹⁹ are speaking out.
- [Teachers](#)¹⁰⁰ are saying that CCSSI is unrealistic and the program is unfinished.
- Stanley Kurtz gave [extensive coverage](#)¹⁰¹ of CCSSI in his new book, “Spreading the Wealth: How Obama is Robbing the Suburbs to Pay for the Cities.”

Conclusion:

Bottom Line – [Dumbing down](#)¹⁰² schools all over the US and using our nation’s children as guinea pigs for a new, untried, [national experiment](#)¹⁰³ based on flimsy ideology and a non-existent educational foundation.

- Teaching math in an [untested](#)¹⁰⁴ way – no evidence it works or has any hope of working – [70% failed](#)¹⁰⁵ Math test in New York.
- Math experts say CCSSI marks the [end of improvement in education](#)¹⁰⁶.
- [Deemphasizes classics](#)¹⁰⁷ – like Huckleberry Finn -- in favor of [comic books](#)¹⁰⁸ and song lyrics and government documents.
- Historical documents – like the [Gettysburg Address – are taught without any context](#)¹⁰⁹.
- One school principal declared, “Any teacher worth her salt knows that you can’t teach kids like this.”
- [A veteran kindergarten teacher](#)¹¹⁰ - “There is nowhere they are teaching them writing — how to make a word, a sentence”
- Critics fume that Common Core is [setting kids up](#)¹¹¹ to fail.
- Well-informed critics agree that Common Core [won’t work](#)¹¹².
- A [past president of the National Council of Teachers of English](#)¹¹³ was “aghast at the vision of the dreariness and harshness of the classrooms.”
- All of this boils down to a federal power grab: It is not the [government’s job](#)¹¹⁴ to impose educational standards or take over the nation’s schools.
- Quote Janice Shaw [Crouse](#)¹¹⁵: “Common Core is doing for education what ObamaCare is doing for health care.” The worst critics are calling it “ObamaCore.”

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