



COMMON CORE: AN OVERVIEW

According to the authors, “*The Common Core is a set of high-quality academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA). These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The standards were created to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life, regardless of where they live.*” <http://www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards/>

Common Core is a compelling idea – unify, bring order and consistency to our national educational standards, which currently are messy and vary widely across schools, districts, and states.

While many states and educators have embraced Common Core, other states, teachers, and parents have grave concerns about this top-down federally sponsored program.



Who are its Authors?

“The Common Core State Standards Initiative” was written and copyrighted by two Washington DC based trade associations, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and funded by Bill and Melinda Gates who contributed an estimated \$27 million. The standards are developed at the **national** level for adoption by the states.

Implementation

1. It is an all-encompassing, national program adopted by 45 states, incentivized by money from the \$4.35 billion Stimulus-funded Race to the Top program. A stipulation of receiving RTTT funds was a mandate to adopt Common Core.
2. Common Core was written and implemented in its entirety, much like the Affordable Healthcare Act. It was not piloted through experimental schools or demonstration programs to test its effectiveness prior to its adoption by the states.
3. Common core was adopted in each state through the act of a governor, board of education, or state secretary of education. No state that adopted Common Core saw the specific standards written into the program or the accompanying curriculum which supported those standards.

Despite the claims of the supporters of Common Core, the lack of teacher, parent, and student input to the program and heavy handed top-down approach to implementation have many educators and parents concerned. (Future Citizen Briefs will explore more aspects of Common Core).

What You Can Do:

Seek reliable sources to stay informed; talk to your local schools, teachers, and school board;

<http://pioneerinstitute.org/featured/debunking-myths-and-claims-about-common-core/>

www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/04/states-must-reject-national-education-standards-while-there-is-still-time;

www.salon.com/2014/04/22/common_core_propaganda_fails_well_financed_education_reformers_fight_common_sense/