

COMMON CORE 101 – THE FAQ



The **Prevent Common Core** FAQ is a Common Core primer as well as answers to frequently asked question. The FAQ is designed to educate people that are unfamiliar with Common Core (CC) and to give others, that are more familiar, a better understanding of the facts surrounding Common Core. The FAQ is also available in an easy to read PDF format that can be downloaded [[HERE](#)]

What exactly is Common Core (CC)?

Common Core is an abbreviated term used to refer to the “*Common Core Initiative*”.

It is a set of national (*Federal*) standards for English and Mathematics written and COPYRIGHTED by two left leaning lobbyist groups, “*National Governors Association*” (NGA) and the “*Council of Chief State School Officers*” (CCSSO).

It is backed and funded by yet another left leaning organization known as the “*Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation*”. These standards were adopted sight unseen by 46 states in exchange for “*Race To The Top*” money and/or waivers from “*No Child Left Behind*”.

It is a set of outcome based federal standards and tests for grades K-12. Common Core eliminates local control over K-12 curriculum in math and English, with the “*Next Generation Science*” being implemented as I write this.

It is a one-size-fits-all, top-down, federally controlled curriculum that will also apply to private schools and homeschoolers. Common core, by design, will dumb down our children and aid in the indoctrination of our children, all starting as early as Kindergarten.

(Science guidelines are forthcoming as the “Next Generation Science”, which is already being fed into the educational system)

There it is, the “Common Core Initiative” in a nutshell.

You can read more about what Common Core is at “[What Exactly Is Common Core?](#)”

Does Common Core prepare our children for college?

Not for a 4-year university. It minimally prepares students for the non-collegiate workforce or for non-selective/community colleges.

A key Common Core creator, [Jason Zimba](#), said that the Common Core can prepare students for non-selective colleges but that it does not prepare students for [STEM](#) careers. He said,

“I think it’s a fair critique that it’s a minimal definition of college readiness... but not for the colleges most parents aspire to... Not only not for STEM, it’s also not for selective colleges. For example, for U.C. Berkeley, whether you are going to be an engineer or not, you’d better have pre-calculus to get into U.C. Berkeley.”

Dr. Sandra Stotsky, an English Language Arts Specialist, who was called in to look at and validate Common Core voted NO to the standards. She stated,

“Common Core English will set our kids 2 years behind the 2 years their already behind the rest of the world, when it comes to reading and writing”

Ret. Stanford University Math Professor James Milgram, a Common Core Math Specialist stated,

“It’s an absolute joke to think Common Core math will prepare your kids for college careers”

Is there an amendment process for voter/parents to alter Common Core?

NO. They are under copyright by two unelected, private D.C. lobbyist groups know as the NGA and CCSSO which have reserved the legal right to be the sole entities that are able to alter the Common Core Standards.

When the standards change, it will be by NGA and CCSSO. ([See Official Document](#))

Are the Common Core Standards locally controlled?

No. They are under [copyright](#) by two unelected, private D.C. lobbyist groups know as the NGA and CCSSO which have reserved the legal right to be the sole entities that are able to alter the Common Core Standards. Additionally, the federal government provided money and waivers that are conditional upon each state adopting and implementing the Common Core Standards and testing.

Do the Common Core Standards improve upon K-12 education?

No one knows. They are an unpiloted experiment. People who are financially invested in Common Core [say yes](#) to the question, while people who aren’t financially interested and/or who study and analyze the Common Core standards, [say no](#).

[Dr. James Milgram](#) (Stanford University emeritus professor who served on the official Common Core validation committee) reported,

“I can tell you that my main objection to Core Standards, and the reason I didn’t sign off on them was that they did not match up to international expectations. They were at least 2 years behind the practices in the high achieving countries by 7th grade, and, as a number of people have observed, only require partial understanding of what would be the content of a normal, solid, course in Algebra I or Geometry. Moreover, they cover very little of the content of Algebra II, and none of any higher level course... They will not help our

children match up to the students in the top foreign countries when it comes to being hired to top level jobs.”

Dr. Sandra Stotsky (University of Arkansas emeritus professor who served on official Common Core validation committee and also refused to sign off on the academic legitimacy of the Common Core) said,

“As empty skill sets, Common Core’s ELA standards do not strengthen the high school curriculum. Nor can they reduce post-secondary remedial coursework in a legitimate way. As empty skill sets, Common Core’s ELA “college readiness” standards weaken the base of literary and cultural knowledge needed for authentic college coursework, decrease the capacity for analytical thinking... and completely muddle the development of writing skills.” (See [Full testimony Here](#))

Is Common Core legal?

No. Under the Constitution, education belongs to the individual states. It is illegal for the federal government to interfere in the states right of making educational decisions. This would mean that the national standards are illegal as well as national data collection. The [General Education Provisions Act](#) prohibits the federal government from directing education and it is extremely clearly,

“No provision of any applicable program shall be construed to authorize any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution, school, or school system, or over the selection of library resources, textbooks, or other printed or published instructional materials by any educational institution or school system...”

An argument can be made here by proponents of the Common Core Standards in stating, the standards are not dictated by the federal government. When you follow the money and take into consideration the definition of [Crony Capitalism](#), the argument becomes moot.

Does Common Core remove most of our traditional classic literature?

Yes. Although it does not specify which classic books cannot be read, the Common Core Standard contains a chart that explains that in fourth grade, students must cut their classic/fiction reading to 50%. By twelfth grade, students must reduce their classic/fiction reading to 30% with informational text taking up 70% of the time spent reading.

Distribution of Literary and Informational Passages by Grade in the 2009 NAEP Reading Framework

Grade	Literary	Informational
4	50%	50%
8	45%	55%
12	30%	70%

Source: National Assessment Governing Board. (2008). *Reading framework for the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

In addition to the replacement of traditional literature with informational text, the Common Core Standards have demonstrated, through **exemplar text**, that a great deal of the literature that will be read is not fit for k-12 students. Dr. Sandra Stotsky, who was one of the English Language Arts Specialist, who was called in to validate the Common Core Standards, voted NO to Common Core. She stated,

“There are forty different books in Common Core that are graphically sexual beyond what we would allow college kids to read”

What is, Informational Text?

Informational texts are documents such as EPA reports and Executive Orders. Informational text is now taking the place of 70% of our high school senior reading, in the form of scientific writings, political writings, opinion pieces and almost anything other than classic novels, poetry, plays or other fictional works. In fact, according to one of the validators of Common Core, up to 75% of the informational text will be about manmade Global Warming and America’s role in the destruction of our planet.

Why would Common Core proponents not want students to learn higher math?

It costs money to educate beyond minimal workforce training. In this **2013 document** put out by the “*National Center on Education and the Economy*” (NCEE) we learn that it’s not important under Common Core to have high educational standards in high school. It suggests that its a waste of time to educate the high school graduates past Algebra II. They’re pushing for an emphasis on the lowest common denominator, while deceptively marketing Common Core as a push for “*rigorous*” academics.

Read these Common Core proponents’ lips,

“Mastery of Algebra II is widely thought to be a prerequisite for success in college and careers. Our research shows that that is not so... Based on our data, one cannot make the case that high school graduates must be proficient in Algebra II to be ready for college and careers. The high school mathematics curriculum is now centered on the teaching of a sequence of courses leading to calculus that includes Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus and Calculus. However, fewer than five percent of American workers and an even smaller percentage of community college students will ever need to master the courses in this sequence in their college or in the workplace... they should not be required courses in our high schools. To require these courses in high school is to deny to many students the opportunity to graduate high school because they have not mastered a sequence of mathematics courses they will never need. In the face of these findings, the policy of requiring a passing score on an Algebra II exam for high school graduation simply cannot be justified.”

The report goes on to say that traditional high school English classes, with their emphasis on classic literature and personal, narrative writing is useless. The report says that Common Core will save students from the irrelevant classics with a new emphasis on technical subjects and social studies via the dominance of informational text,

“The Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (CCSS) address reading in history/social studies as well as science and technical subjects, and in so doing may increase the relevance of high school instruction.”

In calling classic literature and personal writing irrelevant, these Common Core proponents underscore the idea that job prep matters but not the pursuit of wisdom or knowledge.

Why did almost every state drop their educational standards to adopt Common Core?

Proponents say that the reason was to improve education. Opponents say that it had nothing to do with education, that the standards were adopted without analysis or any vetting because the adoption was offered by the federal government under time pressure, in exchange for a chance at large federal grant monies called **Race to the Top**. Even those states that applied and won no money (like Utah) stayed with Common Core, because there were many other federal reasons and incentives to do so.

Will the Common Core Standards remain as they are today?

No. Common Core's **official document** stats,

"The Standards are intended to be a living work: as new and better evidence emerges, the Standards will be revised accordingly."

There's no way for the governed to revise the document by which they've agreed to be governed.

Why does the state school board say we're free to change the Common Core Standards?

States can't delete anything. We can add –a tiny bit. A Common Core **15% rule** says,

"A State may supplement such standards with additional standards, provided that the additional standards do not exceed 15 percent of the State's total standards"

Note:

This rule is repeated in the federal waivers from No Child Left Behind, in the Race to the Top Assessments Grant application, in documents of both PARCC and SBAC testing groups, and in the implementation guide of Achieve, the group contracted to create Common Core.

Will and can the creators of Common Core change the standards without our approval?

Yes. Common Core's **official document** stats,

"The Standards are intended to be a living work: as new and better evidence emerges, the Standards will be revised accordingly."

There's no mechanic for the public to revise the Standards, only the Copyright holder has the rights to make changes. There is also no provision to notify or get approval from the public.

Where do proponents get the notion that Common Core will improve education?

Opponents point out that there was never any field testing for Common Core standards so this is a national experiment using virtually all OUR children. Supporters never attempt to explain how education is supposedly improved by Common Core, nor show a pilot state or pilot classroom where Common Core had been successfully used.

Beyond the many pleasant-sounding marketing lines, there is no documentation or evidence to back up any of the claims that the standards are “higher“. Furthermore there is no documentation or evidence to support claims the CC is/was “*internationally benchmarked*“, “*rigorous*” or “*improves college and career readiness.*” These claims are nothing more than baseless advertising lines.

Yet, upon this lack of evidence, we build our children’s futures.

Are the Common Core Standards free to us?

No. The standards’ development and marketing was paid for primarily by **Bill Gates**. The Common Core tests, for most states, were paid for primarily by the **federal government**. States pay countless millions for the rest of the Common Core Initiative, such as re-training, new text purchases, computer technologies, etc. It has been **incorrectly stated** that these high costs would have been spent anyway, even without Common Core.

Read the full report, **CCSSI Costs**

Was the federal government “Hands-Off” the states adoption of Common core?

No. Secretary **Duncan announced** and praised the release of the standards in 2010. He bribed states using Race to the Top grant money. He **contracted** with the testing groups to micromanage the Common Core tests, in exchange for federal grant money.

Did the federal government bribe states to adopt Common Core?

Yes. States received federal ARRA money to implement **pre-common core reforms** that paved the way for Common Core, including building a State Longitudinal Database System. There were **4 federal key objectives for education reforms** laid out by President Obama which were the four conditions for receiving stimulus monies. **Federally defined common standards** and tests were one of the conditions.

More evidence of bribery and coercion can be seen in the timing of a majority of the states’ adopting Common Core simultaneously with the Race to the Top money lure. Recently, a group of U.S. Senators have denounced what the Executive Branch (Obama Administration) has done in coercing states with Common Core bribes (**Read More**).

Is there any correlation between Common Core and student data mining?

Yes, although Secretary [Arne Duncan](#) told the “*American Society of News Editors*” that opponents make,

“outlandish claims. They say that the Common Core calls for federal collection of student data. For the record, we are not allowed to, and we won’t.”

He just told a bold-faced lie. The [federal Edfacts Exchange](#) collects data for local, state and federal levels. The federal government paid for the states to build matching and interoperable State Longitudinal Database Systems. The White House hosts “*Datapalooza*“, where Common Core and common data standards are spoken of warmly and together. The Department of Education is [listed](#) as a partner at the “*Education Information Management Advisory Consortia*” ([EIMAC](#)). There are many other actions that the Department of Education has taken to remove student privacy, while aiming to align common data standards with common educational standards.

What specifically did the Department of Education do to circumvent privacy of student data?

– *It bribed the states with ARRA Stimulus money to build 50 linkable, twinlike State Longitudinal Database Systems (SLDS). This created a virtual national database.*

– *It altered the (previously privacy-protective) federal FERPA (Family Educational Rights Privacy Act) law to make access to personally identifiable student data –including biological and behavioral data–*

Now, the act of requiring parental consent (to share personally identifiable information) has been reduced from a requirement to just a “best practice” according to the altered federal FERPA regulations.

For more information on this, study the [lawsuit](#) between the Electronic Information Privacy Center and the Department of Education.

– *The US Department of Education partnered with private groups, including the Data Quality Campaign and the CCSSO (that’s the Council of Chief State School Officers –copyright holders on Common Core–) to collect student data nationally.*

Is Common Core about making money at the expense of quality education?

Yes. Educational gains are not the motivator for Common Core. Notice that proponents are either financially invested in the implementation of Common Core, or else must be subservient to it and call it good because they rely on payment from those who are invested. The financial obligation should make the following groups, promotion of Common Core, extremely suspect.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Microsoft, Pearson Education, National PTA, Jeb Bush, Harvard University, National Governors’ Association , Council of Chief State School Officers, Fordham Institute, Manhattan Institute, Exxon, and many more.

Is Common Core respected by higher learning educators?

First, I would like to point out that 132 professors of Catholic Universities recently wrote a [letter](#) denouncing Common Core on both academic and moral grounds.

Now, let's take a look at what the educators have to say.

Dr. Anthony Esolen of Providence College in Rhode Island has written,

“What appalls me most about the standards ... is the cavalier contempt for great works of human art and thought, in literary form. It is a sheer ignorance of the life of the imagination. We are not programming machines. We are teaching children. We are not producing functionaries, factory-like. We are to be forming the minds and hearts of men and women... to be human beings, honoring what is good and right and cherishing what is beautiful.”

Dr. Thomas Newkirk of University of New Hampshire has written,

“The standards are portrayed as so consensual, so universally endorsed, so thoroughly researched and vetted, so self-evidently necessary to economic progress, so broadly representative of beliefs in the educational community—that they cease to be even debatable... The principle of opportunity costs prompts us to ask,

“What conversations won't we be having?”

Since the CCSS virtually ignore poetry, will we cease to speak about it? What about character education, service learning? What about fiction writing in the upper high school grades? What about the arts that are not amenable to standardized testing? ... We lose opportunities when we cease to discuss these issues and allow the CCSS to completely set the agenda, when the only map is the one it creates.”

Dr. Daniel Coupland of Hillsdale College has written,

“Yes, man is made for work, but he's also made for so much more... Education should be about the highest things. We should study these things of the stars, plant cells, Mozart's Requiem... not simply because they'll get us into the right college or into the right line of work. Rather, we should study these noble things because they can tell us who we are, why we're here... If education has become –as Common Core openly declares– preparation for work in a global economy, then this situation is far worse than Common Core critics ever anticipated. And the concerns about cost, and quality, and yes, even the constitutionality of Common Core, pale in comparison to the concerns for the hearts, minds, and souls of American children.”

Dr. Christopher Tienken of Seton Hall University has written,

“Education reform in the United States is being driven largely by ideology, rhetoric, and dogma instead of evidence.... Where is the evidence of the efficacy of the standards? ... Let us be very frank: The CCSS are no improvement over the current set of state standards. The CCSS are simply another set of lists of performance objectives.”

Dr. Tienken also has two powerful short videos on the subject of [standards](#) and of [assessments](#).

Dr. Alan Manning of Brigham Young University has written,

“The Core standards just set in concrete approaches to reading/writing that we already know don’t work very well. Having the Core standards set in concrete means that any attempts to innovate and improve reading/writing instruction will certainly be crushed. Actual learning outcomes will stagnate at best. An argument can be made that any improvement in reading/writing instruction should include more rather than less attention the reading/analysis of stories known to effective in terms of structure (i.e. “classic” time-tested stories). An argument can be made that any improvement in reading/writing instruction should include more rather than fewer exercises where students write stories themselves that are modeled on the classics. This creates a more stable foundation on which students can build skills for other kinds of writing. The Core standards would prevent public schools from testing these kinds of approaches.”

Dr. Bill Evers of Hoover Institute at Stanford University noted,

“The Common Core — effectively national math and English curriculum standards coming soon to a school near you — is supposed to be a new, higher bar that will take the United States from the academic doldrums to international dominance.

So why is there so much unhappiness about it? There didn’t seem to be much just three years ago. Back then, state school boards and governors were sprinting to adopt the Core. In practically the blink of an eye, 45 states had signed on.

But states weren’t leaping because they couldn’t resist the Core’s academic magnetism. They were leaping because it was the Great Recession — and the Obama administration was dangling a \$4.35 billion Race to the Top carrot in front of them. Big points in that federal program were awarded for adopting the Core, so, with little public debate, most did.”

Dr. Terrence Moore of Hillsdale College has written,

“Literature is the study of human nature. If we dissect it in this meaningless way, kids not only do not become college and career ready, they don’t even have a love of learning; they don’t even have an understanding of their fellow men... The thing that bothers me more than anything else is found on page number one of the introduction. That says that Common Core is a living work. That means that the thing that you vote on today could be something different tomorrow, and five years from now it is completely unrecognizable.”

Notes:

Dr. Moore also wrote a most excellent book about Common Core English standards, entitled “The Storykillers.”

Dr. Sandra Stotky has written,

“The wisest move all states could make to ensure that students learn to read, understand, and use the English language appropriately before they graduate from high school is first to abandon Common Core’s ‘standards’...”

“The notion that Common Core’s college and career readiness standards are “rigorous” needs to be publicly put to bed by Arne Duncan, his friends at the Fordham Institute and the media. Two of Common Core’s own mathematics standards writers have publicly stated how weak Common Core’s college readiness mathematics standards are. At a public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in March 2010, physics professor Jason Zimba said, “The concept of college readiness is minimal and focuses on

non-selective colleges.”

Dr. Stotsky also testified that,

“Beyond the lack of clarity from the outset about what college readiness was intended to mean and for whom, Common Core has yet to provide a solid evidentiary base for its minimalist conceptualization of college readiness—and for equating college readiness with career readiness. Moreover... it had no evidence on both issues.”

“Common Core supporters still can’t figure out how to deal with legitimate criticisms of its English language arts (ELA) standards. So they just keep parroting the line that Common Core’s ELA skills are actually standards, are rigorous and prioritize literary study, when it’s quite obvious to any English teacher that they are none of the above.”

“Common Core was/is not about high-quality national education standards. It was/is not about getting low-income, high-achieving students into advanced math and science courses in high school and then into college. CCSSI was and is about how to lower the academic level of what states require for high school diplomas and for admission to public colleges.”

“Of course, Common Core proponents can’t say that lowering academic standards is their goal. Instead, they claim that its standards will reduce the seemingly terrible problems we have with interstate mobility (actually less than 2 percent nationally) or enable Massachusetts teachers to know how Mississippi students compare to theirs (something they never said they were eager to learn), or facilitate nationally the sale of high-tech products to the public schools (something the P-21 skills folks were eager for). They have looked desperately for motivating issues and these are the best cards in their deck, as poor as they are.”

“Their major selling point is how poor our K-12 public education system is in too many states. But it needs to be strengthened, not weakened. We continue to need capable doctors and engineers who build bridges and tunnels that won’t collapse.”

“Are we as a society really ready to agree to Common Core’s low-expectations for college readiness (as professors Zimba and McCallum indicate)? Are we willing to lower the bar as a way of closing the achievement gap?”

“We hear no proponents or endorsers of Common Core’s standards warning this country about the effects of the college-readiness level in Common Core’s mathematics standards on postsecondary and post-baccalaureate academic and professional programs. We hear no proponents or endorsers of Common Core’s standards advising district superintendents and state education policy makers on the kind of mathematics curriculum and courses they need to make available in our secondary schools if our undergraduate engineering colleges are to enroll American students. At this time we can only conclude that a gigantic fraud has been perpetrated on this country, in particular on parents in this country, by those developing, promoting, or endorsing Common Core’s standards. We have no illusion that the college-readiness level in ELA will be any more demanding than Common Core’s college-readiness level in mathematics.” – Sept. 2013 paper: Can This Country Survive Common Core’s College Readiness Level? by R. James Milgram and Sandra Stotsky

Dr. William Mathis, of the University of Colorado, has written,

“The adoption of a set of standards and assessments, by themselves, is unlikely to improve learning, increase test scores, or close the achievement gap.

- *For schools and districts with weak or non-existent curriculum articulation, the CCSS may adequately serve as a basic curriculum.*
- *The assessment consortia are currently focused on mathematics and English/language arts. Schools, districts, and states must take proactive steps to protect other vital purposes of education such as citizenship, the arts, and maximizing individual talents – as well as the sciences and social sciences. As test based penalties have increased, the instructional attention given to non-tested areas has decreased.*
- *Educators and policymakers need to be aware of the significant costs in instructional materials, training and computerized testing platforms the CCSS requires. It is unlikely the federal or state governments will adequately cover these costs.*
- *The nation’s “international economic competitiveness” is unlikely to be affected by the presence or absence of national standards.”*

The Prevent Common Core Objective

The PPC Objectives are as follows,

- To inform and educate as many people as we possibly can, of the cost and affects of the Common Core Initiative.
- To Support and help anyone caught in the traps of the Common Core Initiative.
- To provide informative and educational media, documents and posts.
- To fully repeal the Common Core Initiative

LINKS:

[What Exactly is Common Core?](#)

[FAQ in PDF format](#)

[Addition Links and Resources](#)

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