



Una Fides

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Newsletter

Since 2003

Uproar over Common Core

Common Core, a hot topic in all our media, is a subject of much heated debate and confusion. To help us wade through these conflicting views on education, we have asked our good friend Mary Jo Anderson for her guidance. Mary Jo, an internationally-renowned writer, speaker and activist for orthodox Catholicism, has studied the subject of Common Core extensively. Mary Jo hosts a popular radio program on EWTN as well as serving as a contributing editor and editorial board member for many Catholic magazines.

Those who support Common Core claim the following

"Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting

the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy."

(Mission Statement of the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

Basic Facts

- Common Core did NOT come from the governors of the states. It is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The governors adopted the program because the Obama administration tied 4 billion dollars in education funds to the Common Core implementation. In short, governors were nearly forced into Common Core. Indiana, South Dakota and a number of other states have already backed out before the required implementation in 2014.
- The program has never done even a pilot study to test its efficacy.
- These national standards were not peer-reviewed and prominent educators oppose them. One Stanford University math professor who was asked to be part of the validation committee for math standards was so appalled that he refused to sign off on the program and now actively opposes it.
- The math standards are not even the equal of the poor math standards currently in place - and the math standards are well below those of Europe and Asia.
- State legislatures, all local authorities and particularly parents were all by-passed.
- School choice, charter schools, private schools, religious schools and homeschooling families will not be exempt. What difference does local school choice or vouchers make if there is a national curriculum imposed on all? Some assume that they will simply use their own curriculum, and that will be permitted in private schools, but the catch is that new national standardized versions of assessment test, such as the SAT, will be designed to test from the Common Core Curriculum. Thus, a privately educated students will be at a serious disadvantage when they take the national

exams for college admittance.

Opponents of Common Core cite grave issues

1. The standards were not designed by curriculum experts but by educators and others with an interest in changing American values and worldview.
2. The standards are inferior to standards already in use in most cases. Two members of the validation committee refused to sign off on Common Core. Both the math and English arts are flawed, and measurably deficient compared to current standards, as poor as those are. The Brookings Institution said, "The empirical evidence suggests that the Common Core will have little effect on American students' achievement. The nation will have to look elsewhere for ways to improve its schools."
3. Common Core follows a premise that essentially turns the U.S. school system into a votech system. Students are viewed as future workers with technical skills, not educated, thinking citizens of their country. Students are not taught analytical thinking, critical thinking or moral development. Texts that are classical examinations of virtue, noble action, heroic deeds, self sacrifice and loyalty to family and country are no longer included in the curriculum, though a teacher is not forbidden to supplement with these classics.
4. Content selection is a separate concern from the mechanics of vocabulary and reading. Literary selections, novels, poems, and essays are de-emphasized in favor of practical texts that stress "life skills" such as equipment manuals and grant proposals. Students are not sufficiently introduced to the classics or contemporary literary texts. Worse, the content of some of these "informational texts" is meant to form emotional responses to politically correct questions - material best left to a student's parents.

Link here for a video showing actual first grade texts and how they are used to manipulate the child's emotions:

<http://www.utahnsagainstcommoncore.com/usoe-recommends-social-justice-curriculum-materials-for-1st-grade/>

A "Catholic" version of Common Core has been designed, and the Catholic schools in Florida are implementing it. Many prominent Catholic educators are opposed to this revamp of educational standards, including

Professor Robert George of Princeton. See the link below to view the objections from Catholic educators.

<http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/common-core-education-standards-generate-catholic-concerns/>

"The philosophy of the schoolroom in one generation is the philosophy of government in the next."

Abraham Lincoln

It is incumbent on us as Catholics to educate ourselves and protect our children, our culture and our faith. Possible actions you could take:

- Contact your child's private/church school and protest the implementation of Common Core
- File a letter of opposition with your county school board.

Orange County William.Sublette@ocps.net

Seminole County Karen_Almond@scps.k12.fl.us

- Send a copy of the above letter to Governor Rick Scott

www.flgov.com/contact-gov-scott/email-the-governor/

- Also send copy to Pam Stewart, Education Commissioner
Chancellor. Stewart@fldoe.org
- Send letter to our bishops alerting them to the growing concern about what is in the "common core alligned texts" and how harmful it is to our students. The "Catholic Identity" version is not a safety net, as the NCEA claims. It is most likely that our bishops have not actually seen the Catholic version themselves.

Our success depends on each of us adding our voice!



The Mission of Una Fides is to build the Body of Christ by encouraging Catholic men and women to enrich, fortify, and embrace their faith through prayer, study, and fellowship
www.UnaFides.com