

After successfully teaching for four decades, I have learned what does and does not enrich a child's education. Tragically, too many administrators and politicians look at finances alone, rather than considering quality of education. Since I love teaching and though I am retired, I substitute. Thus, I have had experience with the new common core material. It does not please me. As a special ed. teacher, I have fought to teach kids in the way they best learn since the 70s. The common core guidelines seem to focus on pounding kids into a 'one size fits all' kind of mold. When kids do not understand a concept, the program does not allow teachers time to adequately reteach the concept. In addition, the lessons present only one social point of view to children, as if the lessons are meant to be Soviet-style propaganda. We are a country that respects individual opinions, cultural differences (although, like all world groups, we struggle with faithfulness to this concept), and religious freedom. The Common Core curriculum does not honor our standards. It does seem to be an attempt to force total government control over the thoughts, education, and beliefs of our nation.

Recently, I have written to Gov. Brownback about my concerns related to the proposed 'merit pay' because I am drawn to teaching poor, tough, and disabled children. If his plan becomes law, these kids will be abandoned. They are hard to teach and usually make slower progress than the kids from wealthy and/or strong families. If a good teacher is penalized for teaching the difficult kids, he or she may decide choosing inner city or special ed. schools is formidable.

We, the people, must decide how to best educate our children. That decision must be left up to parents and local school boards. 'One size fits all' does not fit Kansas.

Thank you for caring so much for Kansas' children and schools.

Sincerely,

Terri Fleming