

## Written Testimony HB2292: Repeal Common Core

**To:** House Education Committee Members via [sue.mollenkamp@house.ks.gov](mailto:sue.mollenkamp@house.ks.gov).

**From:** Cory Gibson, Superintendent of Valley Center Schools

**Date:** February 19, 2015

### Five Questions – How Many Can you Get Right?

Before you vote on HB2292, I ask you to read the following. As a former adjunct professor for curriculum leadership, assistant superintendent of student learning, a principal that was recognized on the Senate floor for the best “reading program and curriculum in Kansas”, and now a superintendent of a very forward thinking school district....I’d like to ask you to take the following five question true/false quiz.

**1.) President Obama’s administration created the standards. True or False?**

*The answer is FALSE, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), led the development of the Common Core State Standards.*

**2.) The standards are less rigorous than the previous standards. True or False?**

*The answer is FALSE, in working with educators from more than one district, all have stated that the standards are more rigorous and focused on “critical learning” that all students must experience in order to be successful at the next level. These standards are internationally benchmarked, which means Kansas kids are more prepared to compete in a global society.*

**3.) Common Core standards require teachers to teach in a prescriptive manner. True or False?**

*The answer is FALSE, the “science” of teaching is the curriculum (the “what” of learning)....the “how” things are taught is the “art”. Common Core standards do not prescribe or tell a teacher how to teach anything, they simply outline the important concepts that students should know and be able to do at each grade level.*

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**4.) Every district in KS has adopted Common Core Standards exactly as written. True or False ?**

*The answer is FALSE. The State of Kansas has modified the standards to meet our needs and values, which are named "Kansas College and Career Ready Standards". Each district uses these standards as the skeleton of their curriculum, however, most districts make adjustments that are approved by the Board of Education to meet their local district's needs. Our locally approved curriculum can be found at [www.usd262.net](http://www.usd262.net) under the "curriculum" tab if you'd like to review our curriculum maps. Many state lawmakers have stated that these standards are "forced upon us" by the federal government, which some have stated is "overreaching of the feds". I believe state legislators meddling with curriculum issues is just as "overreaching".*

**5.) Going back to the standards that were created years ago will save schools money. True or False?**

*The answer is FALSE. Going back will require us to pretend that the last five years of professional development, aligning more effective resources just didn't happen. Five years of time and money wasted. I'd estimate it would cost us another two years to "revert back", retrain staff, and purchase new (yet outdated) materials. In reality, our staff would revolt and our students' learning would suffer. Under the current bill proposal, Advanced Placement classes would not be allowed (as AP is aligned to the Common Core), Lexia, a reading program legislators approved for funding would not be allowed, and there would be many more unintended consequences. The decision to "go back" to the standards of yesterday, would likewise result in us going back to the days of **No Child Left Behind**....the thought that sends shivers down my spine, and should yours as well.*

I could have created a multiple page superficial assessment of basic knowledge, similar to the assessments created during the No Child Left Behind era, and quizzed you for days about this topic. I know, however, you have much bigger topics ahead of you such as school funding and growing our economy. I urge you to keep your eye on the ball, and focus on the "big stuff" not the things that can and should be handled by those experts in the field of education.

Thank you for your consideration,



Cory L. Gibson

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*To Be a Premier School District Known for Excellence in Education, Innovative Instruction, Outstanding Programs, and Dedication to Students.*