

**Testimony before the
House Education Committee
on
HB 2289
submitted by
Dr. George Griffith, Superintendent, Trego County USD #208**

Honorable Chair Kelley and members of the House Education Committee I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear today and speak on behalf of Trego County Schools and to express the concerns related to HB 2289. My specific concern is related to any and all language that prohibits the implementation of the educational standards known as the Common Core State Standards.

I am Highly Qualified to speak on this issue as I am a former Education Consultant for the Kansas Department of Education; I have a Ph.D. from Kansas State University in Curriculum and Instruction; I am a leader on the Kansas Team working on the Next Generation Science Standards; and I was the Co-Chair of the Middle School Science Curriculum Development Committee in Texas during the summer of 2000 and worked directly with curriculum in Kansas for the past 9 years.

Benefits of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS):

1. The CCSS have been vetted by educators in 48 states and content experts across the country.
2. The intent of the CCSS is to drive instruction and increase the expectation of all students through rigorous curricular standards.
3. The CCSS are designed to focus on the depth of knowledge in key areas of content so students learn how to use their knowledge and apply it to other, real-world applications.
4. The CCSS are focused on preparing students for careers of the 21st century which is vital for students who are stuck in a 19th century education model.
5. The CCSS provide educators clear direction on what their students should know and be able to do when they leave high school to attend college or career training.
6. Despite claims to the contrary by the out-of-state speakers who presented to your committee on February 14, 2013:
 - Public comments were solicited in the state of Kansas.
 - Teachers and other stake holders in Kansas who would be on a curriculum development committee have had the opportunity to provide input on the CCSS and this bill would not permit any use of the material that was provided by these Kansas citizens.
 - Our teachers and district leaders are capable of developing curriculum that includes the CCSS while providing the breadth needed for students to receive a well-rounded education.

- No federal money was used to develop these educational standards; however, Race to the Top Money (RTTT) was used in the development of two assessments that could be used to measure student knowledge of the CCSS.
- The CCSS does not take away local control; however, HB 2289 immediately and directly takes away the control of local districts to decide which standards they use in their districts.

Concerns and Recommendations:

1. Kansas does not currently require any district within the state to use a specific set of standards as we are a local control state.
 - **Concern: HB 2289 would take control from locally elected officials by dictating what standards can or cannot be used.**
2. Kansas does require a specific state assessment for districts to use for accreditation purposes. RTTT money is being used by two consortiums to develop assessments to measure the CCSS. If members of the committee consider this a valid concern I feel it would be better to address this issue in the following manner.
 - **Recommendation: Require the use of the ACT for measuring student knowledge of the CCSS. The ACT has tests available to measure the knowledge of the CCSS for all required grade levels and has not used RTTT money to develop their assessments. ACT has been and will remain a well-known college entrance examination.**
3. Kansas teachers and state holders have put work in the development of the CCSS.
 - **Concern: HB 289 will prohibit the use of quality educational material developed by Kansans who worked on the development of the CCSS. This is material our students will need to know and would need to be included in any set of Kansas Standards but HB 2289 would prohibit the use or inclusion of this material.**

I urge this committee to not allow partisan politics and the misleading comments from a handful of individuals from out-of-state force the Kansas government to become the overreaching, centralized, totalitarian government it fears from the federal leaders. HB 2289 would be a big step in a path away from democracy and local control.

Thank you for your time and allowing me to speak regarding HB 2289.
I will stand for questions.

Respectfully
Dr. George Griffith
Superintendent of Trego County USD 208.