

Testimony on HB 2289
By
Ken Willard, State Board of Education member

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Madame Chair and members of the House Education Committee, I appear before you in opposition to HB 2289, which would halt further implementation of the Common Core Standards in English/Language Arts and Math that were adopted by the State Board of Education.

I speak today on behalf of the Kansas State Board of Education.

I am pleased to offer the following points to provide clarification on some of the questions you considered and heard addressed regarding this issue:

- The Common Core Standards (CCS) adopted by the Kansas State Board of Education **did not come into existence by federal mandate or a federal initiative.**
- The Kansas State Board recognized that **our old standards in Reading, Writing and Math were simply inadequate** for preparing our children for success in college or the career choices available to them.
- **Writing and development of the CCS was a state led initiative**, done in cooperation with several other states who wanted to raise the bar and prepare their students for competition in the world marketplace.
- **Kansas was a major contributor to the writing of the standards.** Many of the suggestions from our Kansas standards experts were written into the standards.
- **The CCS are much more rigorous, and they require a much deeper understanding of material and concepts** in order to meet the performance expectations required to be College and Career ready upon graduation from High School.
- The Reading standards call for comprehension of much more content-rich and non-fiction texts than our old standards.
- The Math standards require more in-depth understanding of math concepts and the ability to demonstrate that understanding to solve real life problems.
- **Data collection and reporting are not increased by adoption of CCS.** Data collection and reporting are a function of accountability attached to receipt of federal dollars. **Removing Kansas from implementation of CCS will not reduce our current data collection and reporting**

requirements. Conversely, adopting and implementing CCS does not add one bit to our data collection and reporting requirements.

- **Passage of HB 2289 will accomplish nothing.**
 - It will do nothing to alleviate the fears of those who oppose them
 - It will have absolutely no bearing on our dependence on federal dollars for education
 - It will do nothing to improve the education of our children
 - It will do nothing to reduce the cost of education
 - It will do nothing to reduce our burden of data collection and reporting to USDE

- **Passage of HB 2289 will set KS back.** It will require reverting back to our old, inadequate standards while new standards are written and adopted at an approximate cost of \$200K.
 - It will disrupt over two years of teacher training and preparation.
 - It will put us in violation of our waiver from NCLB and in violation of NCLB, if we lose the waiver.
 - It will create a lot of confusion and uncertainty among KS educators
 - It will be a great disservice to KS children

It is my belief that passage of HB 2289 is not in the best interest of Kansas, and I urge you not pass this bill out of committee.

Respectfully,

Ken Willard
Member, State Board of Education