

Kansas Senate  
Ways & Means Committee  
Senator Ty Masterson, Chair  
May 31, 2013

I am Dennis Hedke, Consulting Geophysicist and part-time Legislator in the Kansas House of Representatives, and I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony today on the subject of the national effort to adopt "Common Core" into each and every American school.

While I have not had the opportunity to exhaustively research the deep issues related to this proposed step-change in American education, I have gathered enough information to formulate an opinion as to the potential impacts this broad-based curricular and systemic background will have, if integrated into Kansas education.

I am going to cite but a few comments that come from other reviewers of what is known as the Next Generation Science Standards, which would likely be implemented through Common Core:

**Chemistry, Physics, Biology Groups Respond to Science Standards**

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/02/feedback\\_on\\_common\\_science\\_sta.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/02/feedback_on_common_science_sta.html)

Although the Common Core draft science standards have improved, science teachers and organizations say, many weaknesses remain, *Education Week* reports. This includes a lack of math content and specificity, missing chemistry concepts, and extremely unwieldy language. Many people interviewed worried most elementary teachers cannot handle the science emphasis, as many do not have a strong science background.

**Science Standards 2.0**

<http://www.edexcellence.net/commentary/education-gadfly-daily/common-core-watch/2013/science-standards-2.html>

The second draft of Common Core science standards is "ambitious, but seriously troubled," write pro-Common Core Fordham Institute researchers Chester Finn Jr. and Kathleen Porter-Magee. The standards as currently written would lower states' already awful science standards, the pair writes. The draft ignores essential science content, expects kids to know things in later grades it hadn't required teachers to teach in early grades, emphasizes habits and activities rather than actual knowledge, and dumbs down essential, science-related math. In short, the draft standards' bad qualities outweigh the good.

**A Science Teacher's View: The Backward-Engineered Common Core Science Standards**

<http://nepc.colorado.edu/blog/chemtchr-science-teachers-view-backward-engineered-common-core-science-standards>

A teacher who worked on her state's science standards with the Common Core brigade explains how the process shortchanged learning in favor of creating lists of testing items. The standards aim to teach children a disconnected collection of things to memorize for state tests rather than a cohesive understanding of science and the world. She concludes the science standards would damage science education in the United States.

Respectfully submitted,

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Senate Ways and Means Committee

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