

To Whom It May Concern:

My husband and I do not agree with the education reform. We have five children aged 15-5yrs. old and live in Wichita, KS, Sedgwick County.

In kindergarten, our son could solve his third grade sister's math problems in his head. Last year in first grade after completing a year of the reform materials, he could not solve any basic mathematics problem in his head. He struggled to understand it on paper. Also last year, our fifth grade son was taught that "Thomas Paine came to America to live in a nation with a modern government that cares for the basic needs of every human being." This was the lesson taught from his Common Core labelled Literature textbook. The Assistant Superintendent of our schools has a degree in History and when we approached him with this information he stated, "That is not only inaccurate, it's false."

Those are only two of the many examples of why we are concerned about Common Core. I have been actively speaking out against the education reform because we have seen firsthand that it is not in the best interest of our children. There are so many concerns surrounding its adoption that far outweigh any of the so-called benefits of this education reform program.

When we asked that our children be allowed to "opt out" of the assessments last year because they were merely a trial run, we were told that if our children did not participate in the testing then they could no longer attend the school. Our oldest daughter attended the school k-8th grade. Her kindergarten class was the third to be enrolled at the new school. At the time of the assessments last year, we had a fifth grade, third grade, first grade, and preschool student enrolled there. I have actively participated in the growth and development of the school since our first child's beginning days there. I was PTO president; for years, I organized the room parents and wrote the manual for the group, I've volunteered in the school office, organized multiple fundraisers - teacher appreciation days - Red Ribbon weeks, and so many other functions that I committed to out of love for our children and the education of all the children. It was a heart wrenching moment last year when, with 8 weeks of school left, we had no alternative but to remove our children that Friday morning from the only educational institution they have ever know. We are currently home schooling the four younger children. As I have NEVER home schooled any of our children before, we opted to leave our oldest in high school as a sophomore this year.

Please accept our testimony as evidence of how strongly we disagree with this education reform. There are so many grave concerns. I have spent hours, days, weeks, months, a year and a half speaking out for the children. Not just our children, but all of the children. I have written emails and letters, made phone calls, and had personal meetings with teachers, principals,

administrators, assistant superintendents, superintendents and even the Bishop of the Diocese of Wichita. I have traveled to Topeka for rallies and for testimonies in committee hearings. Our children and I have recently attended a House session from 'the balcony.'

Only the communities in which our children live can understand the environment in which the children live and learn. It's not reasonable to believe that every child from so immensely different circumstances can learn the exact same things in the exact same manner. Also, some of the textbooks and supplemental materials that are being partnered with the standards of this reform are often sub par, inaccurate, or just incorrect.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,
Craig and Rainey Dugan, Wichita, KS, Sedgwick County