

Comprehensive Legislative Package Opposing the Common Core State Standards Initiative

WHEREAS, high student performance and closing the achievement gap is fundamentally linked to an overall reform of our public education system through a strong system of accountability and transparency built on state standards; and

WHEREAS, the responsibility for the education of each child of this nation primarily lies with parents, supported by locally elected school boards and state governments; and

WHEREAS, in 2009 and 2010, the State was offered the chance to compete for education funding through the “Race to the Top” program created by the U. S. Department of Education (“DOE”); and

WHEREAS, the only way to achieve a score in the competition sufficient to qualify for funding was to agree to “participation in a consortium of States that ... [i]s working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards...”; and

WHEREAS, the only such “common set of K-12 standards” existent at that time, or since, is known as the Common Core Standards Initiative (“CCSI”) and was developed without a grant of authority from any state; and

WHEREAS, given that the first official public draft of these standards was released in March 2010, to meet the DOE the State had only two months to evaluate the CCSI standards and agree to adopt them; and

WHEREAS, local education officials, school leaders, teachers, and parents were not included in the discussion, evaluation and preparation of the CCSI standards that would affect students in this state; and

WHEREAS, no empirical evidence indicates that centralized education standards result in higher student achievement; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the CCSI standards would force several states to lower the rigor and quality of their standards; and

WHEREAS, the National Assessment of Educational Progress national test already exists and allows comparisons of academic achievement to be made across the states, without the necessity of imposing national standards, curricula, or assessments; and

WHEREAS, imposing a set of national standards is likely to lead to the imposition of a national curriculum and national assessment upon the various states, in violation of the Elementary Secondary Education Act; and

WHEREAS, claims from the Common Core Initiative that the CCSI standards will not dictate what teachers teach in the classroom are refuted by language in the standards as written; and

WHEREAS, common standards will lessen the ability for local stakeholders to innovate and continue to make improvements over time; and

WHEREAS, when no less than 22 states face budget shortfalls and Race to the Top funding for states is limited, \$350 million for consortia to develop new assessments aligned with the CCSI standards will not cover the entire cost of overhauling state accountability systems, which includes implementation of standards and testing and associated professional development and curriculum restructuring; and

WHEREAS, special interest groups can manipulate the vulnerability of the centralized decision making that governs common standards and lower the standards' rigor and quality over time to suit their priorities;

Option A (Resolution):

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the {legislative body} of the state of {name of state} rejects any policies and procedures that would be incumbent on the state based on the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

Option B (Statute):

The State Board of Education may not adopt, and the State Department of Education may not implement, the Common Core State Standards developed by the Common Core Standards Initiative. Any actions taken to adopt or implement the Common Core State Standards as of the effective date of this section are void ab initio. Neither this nor any other statewide education standards may be adopted or implemented without the approval of the Legislature.