

**Beth Skudder, M.S., Ed.**

26 Milestone Lane, Madison, CT 06443

203 253 9593

bskud13@gmail.com

**RE:** HB5078 'AN ACT IMPOSING A MORATORIUM ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS', to delay the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in the state.

March 11, 2014

Dear Sirs and Madams,

As an educator for more than 26 years, I am writing to you today urging you to **SUPPORT** HB5078: An Act Imposing a Moratorium on the Implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

I have been an educator my entire career, initially as a teacher and most recently as a school administrator. I am a life-long registered Democrat. I am a parent of three children, ages 5, 9 and 10. I am a regular volunteer in my children's schools. I have dedicated my life to understanding how children learn best, and acting on my learning to be the best teacher I can be. As the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are presently being implemented, there is little that reflects any understanding of how children learn, or of what types of learning activities and assessments are developmentally appropriate. This education disaster must be stopped immediately before it goes any further.

You must remember that the CCSS were developed by for-profit companies, led by business professionals who are not educators. The most vocal supporters of the CCSS are these same constituencies. Many teachers and school administrators are afraid to speak out against the CCSS for fear of negative repercussions from their superiors, even though they know what is being asked of them is just plain wrong for the children. I am opposed to the lack of public input in this entire education reform process, and this lack of local input is totally contrary the tradition of locally controlled public education in this country. These supposed "education reforms" are not even based in any research! What other profession would adopt such sweeping changes without first doing extensive research to drive change? The data that does exist (more than a decade of administering CMTs) suggests that using tests to improve student performance via teacher accountability doesn't even work! So, why do the CCSS and associated standardized tests even exist? Why?

I feel utterly betrayed by Democrats and what they are doing to education right now via the CCSS. I am asking all of you to work in a bipartisan way to stop immediately implementation of the CCSS, which will also put a stop to the administration of SBAC tests. SBAC tests, that are being administered this month in Connecticut, are still in their infancy and are testing material from a curriculum that has not even been fully implemented, by teachers who are not yet well-versed in the methodology. All this adds up to a perfect storm of a testing nightmare for children being treated as guinea-pigs, no matter how much data the companies mine from this debacle. I am opposed to the invasion of privacy presented by testing and electronic records of students, beginning in preschool, and facilitated by SBAC tests.

My children are not taking the CMTs in Madison this month. I opted out of these tests because I know it is my right. Every parent should be made aware of their options regarding testing, and these options must always include the option to keep children out of standardized testing events. Safe and supervised locations at school must be provided for children to read, write and draw quietly during the testing sessions.

I am lucky enough that I have been able to spend these eight mornings at home with my children, doing a variety of hands-on art, reading, science and math activities. I wish they had time to do more of these types of activities in school, but between the actual testing, practice tests, and the desperate need of teachers to stay with activities that directly prepare students to score well on these tests, hands-on activities like these get left out of the school day. Hands-on learning is how children learn best, and simple memorization and regurgitation on a test is not quality learning that stays with children for the long term. Valuable school reform will give teachers the time, training, trust and freedom to implement a curriculum rich in meaningful hands-on learning; then you will start to see real improvement in learning. That is our common goal, isn't it?

In conclusion, I support HB5078: An Act Imposing a Moratorium on the Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and the children of Connecticut and I are counting on you to make this a reality as soon as possible.

Thank you for all you do for our great state.

Sincerely,

*Beth Skudder*

Beth Skudder  
26 Milestone Lane  
Madison, CT 06443  
203 253 9593  
bskud13@gmail.com

cc: Representative Kokoruda  
Senator Meyer