

Remarks of Katie Whitten
Kindergarten Teacher
S.B. Butler, Groton Public Schools

Before the State Dept. of Education and State Board of Education
Concerning the proposed changes to Common Core State Standards Implementation
and Teacher Evaluation

March 12, 2014

Good afternoon. My name is Katie Whitten and I'm a Kindergarten teacher in Groton Public Schools.

I have been a kindergarten teacher for 17 years and I can tell you that a typical five year old has not changed developmentally in this time BUT our expectations of them have.

The Common Core is an inappropriate curriculum that pushes education down the throats of our young ones. Study after studies have shown that "play" is an important part of young children's lives. They learn through play how to manipulate their environment, cooperate with their peers, and discover on their own. The Common Core is a rigorous curriculum with a great deal of paper/ pencil tasks. I am not sure why people in government feel that education is a race. In other countries (China, Finland) children do not start formal reading in schools until they are seven years old. Children should be free to explore in a nurturing environment that is developmental appropriate for them to strive not just survive. The way we are headed in education it looks like our children will only be able to survive.

I also believe the cut off for children entering Kindergarten should be changed in the state of CT. We are the only state left to have the December 30th cutoff date. That means for four months of the year I have four year olds in my room. The Common Core is *completely* inappropriate for a four year old. It is steering these little learner and their

parents. Children are being turn off to learning and more and more problems are popping up in our classrooms (attention problems, fine and gross motor delays, anxiety) Please consider moving the date to September 1st. and give our children a chance to develop in an appropriate environment.

The last thing I would like to address is the SEED process. I am not against an evaluation process but the SEED is complexly unreasonable. I would strongly urge you to relook at this process. It is taking a great deal of time and paper work away from teaching.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Katie Whitten

Kindergarten teacher

S B Butler

Groton, CT 06355