

My Name is Kiki Boyles, and I'm an elementary teacher at Achievement First Hartford Academy. We embrace the Common Core standards because they're a powerful tool to help our students get ready to be successful in college and our global society. Delaying their implementation means we are delaying all students from being on the path to success.

The Common Core focuses on critical thinking and strong writing, skills that need to be built in elementary school. It focuses on fewer standards in greater depth, meaning students can gain a deeper understanding of what they are learning. It redefines proficiency at every level so that mastering standards in 1st grade gets them on the right track for success in 2nd grade and so on until our students are truly ready for success in college. The Common Core gives them the skills to compete with their peers all over the world.

There have been some bumps along the way, and there are going to be some more in the future. The Common Core standards are more rigorous and, yes, our students are going to be more challenged. I think that's a good thing! We should embrace the Common Core standards and focus on bringing our students up to this level instead of keeping them where they are and delaying their path to success.

Every teacher wants to see their students succeed. It hurts to see students struggling. But our goal as teachers is to set up our students for long term success. While the initial growing pains may be difficult, it will hurt so much more to see our students graduate without the skills necessary for them to be truly college ready and on track pursue their dreams. Please do not delay the Common Core. Our kids need it.

Thank you.