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In opposition to HB5078

As a relatively new teacher, I did not have the “pleasure” of teaching the endless lists of math of standards that had to be covered each year. However, I do remember marching through my math textbook as a student and learning how to plug and chug through problems with no real world context. Thankfully, I had the rare “math gene” and was able to successfully work my way through my high school’s mathematics curriculum. Unfortunately, I had several very smart friends who were casualties along the way.

It wasn’t until I reached college and truly went in depth with mathematics and saw the connections between math, science, and the real world that I began to see its beauty. When I saw these connections across courses and across disciplines, I truly began to understand math and how to think critically about math problems. I believe that the new common core math standards have the potential to allow for this realization to occur much earlier for students.

The focus of depth over breadth, key standards for mathematical practice, and cohesive and developmentally appropriate progression offer great potential for both teachers and students. The standards work to ensure that students do not learn an algorithm for solving a specific problem, but rather hone the skills necessary to solve any type of problem. For these standards to truly be successful, however, it will take Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) teachers working together to allow students to discover mathematics and apply it in real world contexts. In my limited experience, I have seen the power of both working with these standards and tying them to the real world. I support the Common Core Standards because my students are more engaged and because I have witnessed my students develop critical problem solving and math skills as a result of the new standards. I look forward to the future of math education and to the day where the “math gene” is no longer a rare trait.