

TESTIMONY
H.B. 5078 AN ACT IMPOSING A MORATORIUM ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON CORE
STATE STANDARDS
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The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) which represents the superintendents of schools in CT along with over a hundred school system central office administrators is strongly opposed to the enactment of H.B. 5078 AN ACT IMPOSING A MORATORIUM ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON CORE OF STATE STANDARDS for the following reasons.

- The Common Core of State Standards (CCSS) was developed under the auspices of the National Governors' Association and the Consortium of Chief State School Officers (not the federal government) by a highly competent group of educators who realized that for American children to be competitive on a global scale, the standards for achievement in American public schools needed to be raised and deepened. CCSS is a set of standards that are both higher and deeper than the standards that heretofore existed in the vast majority of school districts in the U.S.
- The CCSS are *internationally benchmarked*. This means that they are similar to standards of achievement that have been set for children in many other countries. Failing to set for American children the standards that have been set and are being met by children in other countries is an unwarranted denigration of the ability of American children to achieve in schools. Our children are at least as capable as any children anywhere. We should not *sell them short*.
- CT voluntarily endorsed the CCSS four years ago in 2010. Since then, every school district in the state has been on a continuum beginning with curriculum revision through teacher preparation to revision of district based assessments. While individual districts are at different places on this continuum, telling them now that they have to stop the process makes no sense whatsoever. What we should be doing instead is not only encouraging them to continue but also providing additional resources at the state level to move them further along the continuum to full implementation.
- Thousands of children in CT's schools today are engaged in learning activities that align with the CCSS. To make this happen, school districts have invested resources for the acquisition of learning materials that have replaced those that previously had been used. If a moratorium is imposed on the implementation of the CCSS, school districts would have to tell the children whom they serve to stop learning a noticeable portion of what they are now learning, stop using the CCSS aligned materials that they are now using and somehow find for student use the ones that were discarded when the commitment to the CCSS was made.
- The legitimate concern that educators and children would be subjected to penalties if during the CCSS implementation process student achievement levels are not what they will be when full implementation is in place has been addressed for the near

future. State test results this school year and next school year will have no bearing on the evaluation of educators. As far as children are concerned, the implementation of the CCSS does not in any way change what has been a fact in CT for at least 24 years. State test results have been and will continue to be used for diagnostic purposes as only one of the pieces of information that teachers use to plan instruction for children. Given this practice, the state test results this year and going forward will be an important but by no means only source of information that districts will use to determine what needs to be done next to implement the CCSS fully.

- Until approximately the last twelve months, districts have worked to implement the CCSS for the most part on their own. During the last year, the CT State Department of Education, has significantly *ramped up* assistance and support for districts. While the degree of state assistance and support still needs to be increased, imposing a moratorium on the implementation of the CCSS at precisely the moment when that assistance and support is significantly increasing would be equivalent to imposing a moratorium on the administration of a particular medicine that is now available on the grounds that it should have been made available sooner.

What this all boils down to is that CT's school districts have, under difficult circumstances, made substantial progress towards implementing a much needed increase and deepening of standards for student learning. To, in essence, *pull the rug out from under* the districts by now telling them that they have to stop this work would be a terrible mistake.