

**Jack Bryant- NAACP**  
**Education Public Hearing- Testimony in opposition to H.B. 5078**  
**March 12, 2014**

Good day. My name is Jack Bryant. I am the president of the Stamford NAACP and State NAACP 2nd Vice President.

I am here to support implementation of the Common Core State Standards because every child deserves the opportunity to get a high-quality education, no matter where he or she lives.

But today in cities like Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford, one-third of our students will not graduate from high school. That is not an acceptable reality.

As our governor has said, education is the Civil Rights issue of our time. Only recently in our nation's history the Supreme Court affirmed that the quality of our students' education must be equal, regardless of the color of their skin or how much money their parents make.

In Connecticut today, education is both separate and unequal. According to the State Department of Education, only 32 percent of our state's African American 3rd graders reached "Proficient" in reading on state assessments. Again, that is not an acceptable reality.

The Common Core Standards are designed to make sure that all of our kids have access to the world-class education they deserve, regardless of the color of their skin. We must make sure that all kids have access to great teachers, principals, and public schools.

Our schools need to prepare our children for the jobs of tomorrow so Connecticut is a place where people want to live and work, and where companies want to invest.

Don't buy in to the misinformation you've been fed. The Common Core is not a curriculum. It's a set of colorblind standards designed to make sure that every child learns what they need to succeed.

And those who seek to confuse the issue by confusing the standards with the assessments are playing semantic games. The goal must be implementation.

School districts were recently granted two years of flexibility, offering a change to implement the Common Core and the Smarter Balanced assessments with care.

Don't make the mistake of buying in to lies and misinformation. This state committed to the Common Core State Standards in 2010. We owe it to our children to keep that commitment.

Thank you.