

Testimony

Today you are going to hear a lot of testimony from educators, teachers, parents, and students. I am here as a parent, a mother of 2 children. My daughter Sara graduated high school before our district started implementing Common Core. She is very successful at Quinnipiac University in their pre law program. Her brother, Charles, is 16 and has spent the last year and half learning or rather not learning under Common Core.

When I first heard about CC I thought great. What parents doesn't want higher education standards and more in depth learning? I am still waiting for that to happen.

The begging of his sophomore year we noticed big changes in Charles and his school work. We met with his teachers and the administration in East Haddam repeatedly asking why the work was being "dumbed down." We of course were told it was not but when specific examples were pointed out, such as an accelerated history classes consistently coloring and making posters but not having written assignments. We pointed out that our daughter had the same class and the work was day and night. When we asked for the curriculum we were told repeatedly it would be provided but when the school was pressed it was admitted that we don't have a curriculum in our district. The reason for the lack of text books given was the district was waiting for publishers to create books aligned to Common Core. Our meetings ended.

I have seen first hand the "dumbing down" that is taking place. Charles came to his dad and I in December and asked us to please find a school for him where he could learn and teachers were able to teach. We are now paying for a private school for him along with our taxes to the district of East Haddam. We had to take out a loan to educate our son. After 2 months at The Williams school in New London, Charles is once again happy to go to school, engaged in learning and on his way to becoming college and career ready.

So we have an education reform in place with no curricula, no textbooks, teachers still learning and a test that hasn't been tested. No matter how much money is thrown at this reform it is doomed to fail just because the prep work was not done properly. The homework was not done on Common Core.

High school is suppose to be a time of learning and making memories, Unfortunately, the memories may not be good. I can tell you we have a whole section of high schoolers who are under tremendous stress. I hear almost nightly from students and or parents that the stress is overwhelming. We have teachers who are not prepared to teach Common Core and it is not their fault. They were ill prepared. We also have teachers that are no longer able to bring their talents into the classroom. We have students that are overwhelmed and really not learning anything other than how to test.

Common core seems to be a one size fits all but students are not one size. This country was built by individuals who thought outside the box why would we change that.

As a parent, taxpayer, and voter I am asking you to stop Common Core and let the districts decide what is best. I don't want my child to be Common, I want him to have the chance to be extraordinary.

Thank you,

Terry Dickinson