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Subject: HB 1508: Please Support
From: Catie McLaughlin <catiemclaughlin@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Feb 19, 2014 9:01 pm
To: Catie McLaughlin <catiemclaughlin@gmail.com>

my letter to the reps for the hearing tomorrow

Date 2/19/14

Dear Representatives on the House Education Committee,

I am writing to ask you to **support HB 1508**.

I'm a mother of 3 school-aged children and live in a town that people have long thought had an outstanding school. I have researched the good and bad of Common Core (CC) and Smarter Balance (SB) testing, refusing from the beginning to believe what "one side" says. I've heard the administrators, Mr Gates, Arne Duncan, articles from far-left newspapers, far-right newspapers, and online posts from across the spectrum. I have done many, many hours of due diligence in researching this topic. Overwhelmingly, the evidence is clear that CC and SB are *not* a good thing for our state.

The messages from the pro-Common Core side, including those from my state senator, Ms. Gage at the DOE, and my local principal have lacked substance and evidence. They rehash the same lines - that CC was a "state-led, voluntary" initiative that will help *all* students become "college and career ready" with the new "rigorous" standards.

We heard such lavish promises with No Child Left Behind years ago and less than 10 years into that, states were clamoring for a NCLB waiver.

There is no evidence that CC and SB testing were debated, deliberated, researched, analyzed, or cross-examined against all other options at the NH BOE level, my local SAU, or my school. It is a shocking realization that our administration will cede to the temptation of receiving funds in exchange for completely overhauling our education system which Gov Hassan says is often "ranked among the nation's best!" Signing on to such standards that are copyrighted and, by law, allow for only 15% deviation, was the **easy** thing to do, but **not the best, nor the right thing**.

Among the many other CC and SB flaws:

1. There is no model that shows that how the CC will rapidly adjust to our rapidly-changing world. This means the phrase "ensuring all children are college and career ready" means nothing!
2. The costs have not been tabulated. Further, by aligning to the CC, we set ourselves up to be forced to make further changes to technology and curriculum at *their* price tags on *their* terms.

3. Trial testing in our state and other states has not gone well. Principals, teachers, school board members, and parents are coming out against it. States that began implementation before us have had major public outcries and MA has seen declines in performance. As a result, MA just voted in Nov/Dec to delay the use of the CC tests until 2015.

4. CC puts kids at a disadvantage in the math and sciences with its poor, confusing, "buffet-approach" to math at the early grades. Success in math is the greatest indicator of succeeding in college and advancing through math sets up students to get STEM degrees in 4 years time, and STEM career-fields are predicted to grow the fastest in the next 20 years.

This is a bi-partisan issue. This is an issue of the hearts, souls and minds of our children. Your children and grandchildren, and mine, are not supposed to be on a factory assembly line in schools. They need caring, inspiring teachers who have room in their days to bring the art of teaching right along the science of it. CC and SB overemphasize testing, placing too great an importance on something that is merely a snapshot of year-long interactions between students, teachers, and parents. Children are, by nature, all very different. Imagine setting a standard that all children sang a song at perfect pitch, had the same blood pressure, ate the same food, regardless of allergies and food sensitivities! That is what CC and SB attempt to do!

Please join me and many moms and dads in halting CC. It is not a quality product in any sense of the phrase. Teachers and parents are already saying, "Get out now."

Please hear their voices and support HB 1508.

Respectfully,

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