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Children for Sale

Published January 16, 2013 | By [Oak Norton](#)

Children for Sale

By [Alyson Williams](#)

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No more decisions behind closed doors! Let's get everyone talking about Common Core.

In the spring of 2011 I received a receipt for the sale of my children. It came in the form of a flyer that simply notified me that my state and thereby my children's school would comply with the Common Core. No other details of the transaction were included. The transaction was complete, and I had no say. In fact, it was the very first time I'd heard about it.

I know what you're thinking. That's outrageous! Common Core has nothing to do with selling things, especially not children!

Okay, so the idea that the State School Board and Governor who'd made this decision could be described as "selling" my children is hyperbole. It is an exaggeration intended to convey an emotion regarding who, in this land of the free, has ultimate authority over decisions that directly affect my children's intellectual development, privacy, and future opportunities. It is not even an accurate representation of my initial reaction to the flyer. I say it to make a point that I didn't realize until much, much later... this isn't just an issue of education, but of money and control. Please allow me to explain.

That first day my husband picked up the flyer and asked me, "What is Common Core?" To be honest, I had no idea. We looked it up online. We read that they were standards for each grade that would be consistent across a number of states. They were described as higher standards, internationally benchmarked, state-led, and inclusive of parent and teacher in-put. It didn't sound like a bad thing, but why hadn't we ever heard about it before? Again, did I miss the parent in-put meeting or questionnaire... the vote in our legislature? Who from my state had helped to write the standards? In consideration of the decades of disagreement on education trends that I've observed regarding education, how in the world did that many states settle all their differences enough to agree on the same standards? It must have taken years, right? How could I have missed it?

At first it was really difficult to get answers to all my questions. I started by asking the people who were in charge of implementing the standards at the school district office, and later talked with my representative on

the local school board. I made phone calls and I went to public meetings. We talked a lot about the standards themselves. No one seemed to know the answers to, or wanted to talk about my questions about how the decision was made, the cost, or how it influenced my ability as a parent to advocate for my children regarding curriculum. I even had the chance to ask the Governor himself at a couple of local political meetings. I was always given a similar response. It usually went something like this:

Question: “How much will this cost?”

Answer: “These are really good standards.”

Question: “I read that the Algebra that was offered in 8th grade, will now not be offered until 9th grade. How is this a higher standard?”

Answer: “These are *better* standards. They go *deeper* into concepts.”

Question: “Was there a public meeting that I missed?”

Answer: “You should really read the standards. This is a good thing.”

Question: “Isn’t it against the Constitution and the law of the land to have a national curriculum under the control of the federal government?”

Answer: “Don’t you want your kids to have the best curriculum?”

It got to the point where I felt like I was talking to Jedi masters who, instead of actually answering my questions, would wave their hand in my face and say, “You will like these standards.”

I stopped asking. I started reading.

I read the standards. I read about who wrote the standards. I read about the timeline of how we adopted the standards (before the standards were written.) I read my state’s Race to the Top grant application, in which we said we were going to adopt the standards. I read the rejection of that grant application and why we wouldn’t be given additional funding to pay for this commitment. I read how standardized national test scores are measured and how states are ranked. I read news articles, blogs, technical documents, legislation, speeches given by the US Education Secretary and other principle players, and even a few international resolutions regarding education.

I learned a lot.

I learned that most other parents didn’t know what the Common Core was either.

I learned that the standards were state accepted, but definitely not “state led.”

I learned that the international benchmark claim is a pretty shaky one and doesn’t mean they are better than

or even equal to international standards that are considered high.

I learned that there was NO public input before the standards were adopted. State-level decision makers had very little time themselves and had to agree to them in principle as the actual standards were not yet complete.

I learned that the only content experts on the panel to review the standards had refused to sign off on them, and why they thought the standards were flawed.

I learned that much of the specific standards are not supported by research but are considered experimental.

I learned that in addition to national standards we agreed to new national tests that are funded and controlled by the federal government.

I learned that in my state, a portion of teacher pay is dependent on student test performance.

I learned that not only test scores, but additional personal information about my children and our family would be tracked in a state-wide data collection project for the express purpose of making decisions about their educational path and “aligning” them with the workforce.

I learned that there are fields for tracking home-schooled children in this database too.

I learned that the first step toward getting pre-school age children into this data project is currently underway with new legislation that would start a new state preschool program.

I learned that this data project was federally funded with a stipulation that it be compatible with other state’s data projects. Wouldn’t this feature create a de facto national database of children?

I learned that my parental rights to deny the collection of this data or restrict who has access to it have been changed at the federal level through executive regulation, not the legislative process.

I learned that these rights as protected under state law are currently under review and could also be changed.

I learned that the financing, writing, evaluation, and promotion of the standards had all been done by non-governmental special interest groups with a common agenda.

I learned that their agenda was in direct conflict with what I consider to be the best interests of my children, my family, and even my country.

Yes, I had concerns about the standards themselves, but suddenly that issue seemed small in comparison to the legal, financial, constitutional and representative issues hiding behind the standards and any good intentions to improve the educational experience of my children.

If it was really about the best standards, why did we adopt them before they were even written?

If they are so wonderful that all, or even a majority of parents would jump for joy to have them implemented, why wasn’t there any forum for parental input?

What about the part where I said I felt my children had been sold? I learned that the U.S. market for education is one of the most lucrative – bigger than energy or technology by one account – especially in light of these new national standards that not only create economy of scale for education vendors, but require schools to purchase all new materials, tests and related technology. Almost everything the schools

had was suddenly outdated.

When I discovered that the vendors with the biggest market share and in the position to profit the most from this new regulation had actually helped write or finance the standards, the mama bear inside me ROARED!

Could it be that the new standards had more to do with profit than what was best for students? Good thing for their shareholders they were able to avoid a messy process involving parents or their legislative representatives.

As I kept note of the vast sums of money exchanging hands in connection with these standards with none of it going to address the critical needs of my local school – I felt cheated.

When I was told that the end would justify the means, that it was for the common good of our children and our society, and to sit back and trust that they had my children's best interests at heart – they lost my trust.

As I listened to the Governor and education policy makers on a state and national level speak about my children and their education in terms of tracking, alignment, workforce, and human capital – I was offended.

When I was told that this is a done deal, and there was nothing as a parent or citizen that I could do about it – I was motivated.

Finally, I learned one more very important thing. I am not the only one who feels this way. Across the nation parents grandparents and other concerned citizens are educating themselves, sharing what they have learned and coming together. The problem is, it is not happening fast enough. Digging through all the evidence, as I have done, takes a lot of time – far more time than the most people are able to spend. In order to help, I summarized what I thought was some of the most important information into a flowchart so that others could see at a glance what I was talking about.

I am not asking you to take my word for it. I want people to check the references and question the sources. I am not asking for a vote or for money. I don't expect everyone to agree with me. I do believe with all my heart that a decision that affects the children of almost every state in the country should not be made without a much broader discussion, validated research, and much greater input from parents and citizens than it was originally afforded.

If you agree I encourage you to share this information. Post it, pin it, email it, tweet it.

No more decisions behind closed doors! Let's get everyone talking about Common Core.

(Click to enlarge)

[Flowchart Sources](#)

Thanks to Alyson Williams for permission to publish her story.

This was first posted at [Common Core: Education Without Representation](#).

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10 Responses to *Children for Sale*

- *DALANE ENGLAND* says:
[January 16, 2013 at 5:51 am](#)

With all due respect to every person that has anything to do with common core, please do your homework! The lower standards are the least of our worries. Why should everyone lose thier privacy and have their data stored by the Federal government? Why would we ever settle for anyone outside

of our state to have any say or influence on our education and decisions. The evidence is there and not hard to get. Please don't believe rhetoric. Please do not believe what those who are benefiting from CC say, do your due diligence! This is about our children and our personal liberties. You will really miss them when they are gone.

Thank you.

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• [Tiffany](#) says:

[January 16, 2013 at 6:18 am](#)

I too have met the Jedi masters. I called the State School Board to issue a complaint about Common Core. I heard that there is nothing I can do, it's here to stay. I made the point that in Davis County where I live, 90% of students to take the A.P. Calculus test pass and most pass with very high score for the last TWENTY + years. I was told that other districts weren't as successful. Oh, I suggested, I'm sure the teachers in the Davis School District would be willing to share their program with the rest of the state. We went around and around, but got nowhere. I am tired of being told that I don't know what is best for my child. I am tired of taxes. I am tired of the constant infringement on liberty and privacy and I am tired of being lied to by the USOE!

[Reply](#)

• [Rhonda](#) says:

[January 16, 2013 at 7:17 am](#)

There's another problem that I think is the real root:

Our nation USED to have a natural 'common core'.

Now we don't. Deep down, we know this and are searching for something to unify us.

Some citizens still have it, but they are being silenced by an increasingly vocal and controlling group.

Our common core was our belief in the Bible and its attendant moral teachings. A belief that we are ultimately, individually responsible to God for all that we do, think, and become. In the 1828 Webster's Dictionary, under the definition of "education", we find "Education comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, and form the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations. To give children a good education in manners, arts and science, is important; to give them a religious education is indispensable; and an immense responsibility rests on parents and guardians who neglect these duties."

That earlier common core has been displaced by a more common belief that God is irrelevant and therefore government must serve His function of accountability.

I believe the only way to recover from this- to recover our freedoms to truly govern ourselves- is to relearn these basic core principles. As we learn them, teach them to our families and those within our influence, others will see that government on this level is unneeded. The answer is in turning back to God. We have to be diligent in searching out truth- thank you, Alyson!- but we first have to know how to tell the difference between *truth* and the *distorted* truth. And then we need to be vocal

about it. Light chases darkness away. Thank you to those who are walking in truth, searching, and vocal!

[Reply](#)

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Tiffany says:

[January 16, 2013 at 11:38 pm](#)

Great thoughts Rhonda. I appreciated your comment.

[Reply](#)

•

PEGGY COX says:

[January 16, 2013 at 9:29 am](#)

I DON'T SEE THIS ANY DIFFERENT THEN ANYTHING ELSE BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM US, EXCEPT FOR THE BIG FACT THAT IT IS EFFECTING OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN AND GREAT GRANDCHILDREN. AND THAT'S WHEN WE MUST BAND TOGETHER TO SAVE OUR FAMILIES. THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IS THAT NO ONE IS DELIBERETLY LISTENING AND THEY DON'T CARE WHAT WE THINK OR CARE ABOUT. THEIR WHOLE AGENDA IS TO RULE AND REIGN OVER THE INNOCENT AND DELIBERTLY TAKE AWAY OUR CHILDRENS RIGHTS FOR FREEDOM, AND TEACH THEM TO BELIEVE INFORMATION THAT THEY CAN BRAIN WASH THEM INTO BELIEVING DUE TO THEIR INNOCENT MINDS. AND WE WILL RECIEVE IN RETURN, CHILDREN WE WON'T EVER RECOGNIZE. WHEN WE HAVE A TYRANT RULING OVER OUR LAND AND FOLLOWERS WILLING TO SUCCUMB TO HIS REGULATIONS AND ENDORCEMENTS ON SCHOOL ISSUES, WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT PULLING THEM OUT OF THESE SCHOOLS AND FINDING NEW LEVELS OF TEACHING AND UNDERSTANDING. BUT UNFORTUANETLY WE HAVE NO LEADERS WHO ARE CHRISMATIC ENOUGH TO FORCE THEIR HAND, AND SO WE FIND OURSELVES ONCE AGAIN AT THE HAND OF SACRIFICING ALL THAT WE HAVE WORKED HARD TO KEEP FROM HAPPENING, MAKING IT'S WAY INTO THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS WILLING TO TEACH SOCIALISTC PROPAGANDA.

[Reply](#)

•

Daneece Hernandez says:

[January 16, 2013 at 4:02 pm](#)

This needs to go viral! Thank you for all you are doing to search for the truth behind common core.

[Reply](#)

•

Max Jamison says:

[January 17, 2013 at 5:15 pm](#)

What ever happened to returning funding and control of our children's education to the individual states? Oh, I forgot. "You lost that election." (No, we only lost the Presidential election.) I don't recall abdicating local control of our children's education in favor of lock step, one-size-fits-all national education. (This reminds me of how the National Socialist Party (Nazi) took over Germany by first controlling ALL of the children's education. Can you spell propaganda?) I'm all for MINIMUM national standards, but that doesn't mean we cannot EXCEED or customize them on a local level if we want. And it certainly doesn't mean that we should not be able to share better ideas. Hmmm.... Isn't that what charter schools and tuition grants were supposed to do?

[Reply](#)

•

Lynn Norton says:

[January 18, 2013 at 1:03 pm](#)

I am sending this info to all my children & gch for my ggch. I live in Idaho and we are trying to get Common Core out of Idaho. Tkx for your efforts.

[Reply](#)

•

Cameron S says:

[January 18, 2013 at 6:24 pm](#)

Is there a petition on petitions.whitehouse.gov? If not, let's start one. That's a good way to get the word out there more.

[Reply](#)

•

Stuart Harris says:

[January 23, 2013 at 5:47 pm](#)

This is just one of many problems in our current society. Our grandparents should never have allowed socialist (public) education to get a foothold in the US. If you really want to do something, you'll need to band people together and raise enough money to start or buy your own radio station or newspaper. Until you have major influence in the media, you will not be successful in turning things around.

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