

When I was invited to speak for 20 minutes on the topic of Common Core, I panicked – my typical talk is 45 minutes to an hour, with PowerPoint slides. So, I thought long and hard about what I was going to tell you that would make a difference and leave you with a few actionable goals. I will start with part of a speech a parent from Manchester, NH, gave to his local school board, titled, “Don’t experiment on my kids.” He said:

There are many aspects of common core that I think are problematic. In my mind, they range from troubling to truly mind boggling:

- I could talk to you today about my disappointment that following the standards will mean that our high school graduates will be [years behind the rest of the world in math](#).
- Or I could express my deep reservations about the [abdication of local educational sovereignty](#).
- Or I could share my outrage at the inappropriate, [dangerous](#) and possibly unconstitutional [data sharing that accompanies common core](#).
- Or I could recite the [growing list](#) of [communities](#) and [states](#) who are [hitting the brakes on common core](#) and questioning its efficacy.
- Or I could recount [testimony from developmental child psychologists](#) who insist that the common core standards ask elementary school children to perform tasks that require areas of their brains that won’t be fully developed for several more years.
- Or I could repeat stories pouring in from other states about [exasperated teachers and emotionally drained children](#) who are wrestling with a badly and hastily constructed system.
- Or I could mention the fact that Sandra Stotsky – credited with developing one of the country’s strongest sets of academic standards for K-12 students for the state of Massachusetts – [refused to endorse](#) the common core English language arts (ELA) standards despite being paid to do so.
- Or I could mention the fact that James Milgram – professor emeritus of mathematics at Stanford University – [refused to endorse](#) the common core mathematics standards despite being paid to do so.
- Or I could object to the shift away from knowledge and mastery in favor of [empty skills](#), which will lead to a work force full of sophomores, which you may know is Greek for “wise fool.”

- Or I could explain the danger in a standard that requires children to [use emotional words](#) to construct persuasive arguments instead of classical techniques of rhetoric that instead rely on logic and reason.
- Or I could highlight the dangers of a system that favors inquiry-based learning that train teachers to become facilitators instead of instructors.

All of the above statements are fact. But this father of four asked a simple question of the school board... Why are you experimenting on my child?

Any one of these concerns is enough to put the brakes on this effort and seriously question whether common core will deliver the change that our education system desperately and unquestioningly needs. Many of you have heard my detailed talk about Common Core, and if you haven't, I will be happy to email you the PowerPoint presentation. Today I want to step back a bit, and put the issue of Common Core in a broader context for you.

First, how did we get here? Why is there a constant barrage of positive spin and pro-common core "talking points" from our local newspapers, school boards, and even our state legislators?

Follow the money. Because groups like Bill Frist's SCORE (the State Collaborative on Reforming Education), Michele Rhea's Students First, your local Chamber of Commerce, etc., are doing what its members have been paid to do – lobby for the Common Core standards. Paid by whom? Primarily the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which has decided it should be allowed to conduct its grand education experiment on American children because of Gates's superior wealth and intellect. But the goals of Gates and the other private corporate entities that are pushing Common Core don't necessarily correlate to what parents want for their children.

The Common Core standards were created by two private trade associations, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, financed largely by Gates and imposed on states with the lure of federal grants. (Tennessee received over \$500M in RTTT grant money for our application – which was submitted before the standards were even drafted!)

It occurred to me recently that in many ways, Common Core and Obamacare are very similar. Some even call it ObamaCORE. Why?

- Nancy Pelosi said of the Affordable Care Act “We have to pass the bill to see what is in it,” - the same is true of Common Core. The standards were drafted AFTER the states submitted applications, all of which stated that if accepted, the state agreed to adopt Common Core Standards. But the regulations are still being written. At this time there are national standards for ELA and Math. The national standards for science and social studies are currently being drafted (but the authors got clever – they are called “Next Generation” standards, not common core...)
- Teachers still don’t really know what to expect – in fact, Tennessee spent over \$3.5M this year to “retrain” teachers how to teach to the new standards. All teachers know is that a major portion of their evaluation, and thus career ladder, will depend on how their students do on multiple national “assessments.” We are spending so much time and money weighing the steer that we are forgetting to feed it, and then wonder why it isn’t gaining any weight. Teachers, like many doctors under Obamacare, are retiring early and fleeing their profession in record numbers.
- There is a huge reliance on collecting and storing data – all kinds of data – grades, test scores, and other academically relevant information like attendance records, discipline records, to personal data, health records, biometrics , eye movement, facial expression, posture, response to stress, as well as the finances, demographics, politics, and religious affiliation of the family. All stored in the cloud, and shared with other federal and state agencies, just like Obamacare.
- Common Core creates a system of top-down education control designed to give students the minimum amount of education they need for community college or an entry-level job. The idea is to develop workers for the managed economy, not to educate citizens. Of course, the political class and their favored friends are not subject to Common Core, any more than they are to Obamacare. Sidwell Friends school, which the Obama daughters attend, will NOT be implementing Common Core.

There is more to both Obamacare and Common Core than meets the eye. I have been amused lately to hear people shocked – shocked, I say, that they are losing their individual health plans;

that the prices are sky-rocketing, that the president lied when he said that if you liked your healthcare plan you could keep it, etc. It was never a secret that the end goal for Obamacare is to destroy private healthcare insurance and force us into a European socialist single provider system. Over half of the country just refused – or was so dumbed down by public education that they were unable - to connect the dots. Not that this was a new idea - many of you are familiar with Ronald Reagan’s famous speech in 1961 warning of the evils of socialized medicine. Like Obamacare, there is a deeper, underlying end goal to Common Core. In 1934, the Carnegie Corporation said we are going to use the schools to change the US from a free market system to a [planned economy](#). In a planned economy, as in Communist countries, the administration chooses at an early age what your child will do all throughout their lives. As my friend Kelleigh Nelson wrote in her recent article “Communism and Common Core Diversion,” Common Core is a diversion. The real means to government control of education lies in school choice, vouchers, and charter schools. She explains:

Everyone is on the bandwagon believing they are fighting Communist Core and perhaps winning, but it is a grand illusion, and few see the truth of the matter. Common Core has truly been with us since the 70s (under other names such as “outcome based education” or “direct instruction”)... Simply put, the goal of government control of all education is about eliminating any and all private, religious, or homeschooled education. With one cent of tax money going to a private, religious, or home schooled child, comes all the regulations and control of the federal government!

Writing to fellow education researchers, Charlotte Iserbyt, former Senior Policy advisor in Reagan's Education Department, and author of [The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America](#), had this to say,

"I want to warn all the wonderful people fighting Communist Core that should they win this battle, their victory may be hollow, since these evil people always have not just one, but many substitute options up their sleeves to offer us, clearly disguised as something they know we will accept. They know that CC is exactly what they have been doing to our children since the seventies at least. The only difference is, they have decided to be open about it now. They have the technology to implement both the curriculum and assessment, and the ability to share data

worldwide, to health care agencies, juvenile programs, corporations, etc. All the components have finally merged for the institutionalization of lifelong learning, under the umbrella of the unelected school board. This is most dangerous! The focus on Marxist curriculum, its standards, outcomes, goals, objectives, behaviors, dispositions, psychological Marxist assessment, etc., all have been with us for many years.”

Yet, many of us who just got involved in fighting Common Core Standards weren't looking at the big picture! We couldn't see the forest for the trees! We couldn't see the diversion, we couldn't see that the left and the right are in bed together to totally destroy all private and religious education, and that includes homeschooling.

Vouchers and education choice originally came from the left and was sold to the right. Now, both the right and left support this shift in emphasis from academics to work force training. This is proven by the fact the elites from both parties, including the globalist, [NWO U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#); the internationalist [Aspen Institute](#), of which UN Agenda 21 Maurice Strong was Director; [President Obama](#), his [Secretary of Education Arne Duncan](#); the [Heritage Foundation](#) (whose poster boy is [Milton Friedman, originator of vouchers/choice](#)) and all other neo-con Trotskyite groups; AND the globalist [Council on Foreign Relations](#) (founded in 1921 by the global-minded Rockefellers) support charter schools and vouchers.

Conservatives -including Rand Paul - are calling for tax-funded school choice via vouchers, and they know exactly what they're doing. However, they fail to tell you that, "WHAT THE GOVERNMENT FUNDS, THE GOVERNMENT CONTROLS!"

They also support charter schools which are tax funded public schools WITH NO ELECTED BOARDS. The very definition of a charter school is "an alternative education system where a school receives public funding and operates privately." This is Taxation without representation! There won't be any elected boards to complain to about sex, drug, and death education in the schools, or the politically correct "green" nonsense. A free society elects its representation. A tyrannical society consists of unelected boards/councils (did you know the term for an unelected council is “soviet”?)

We now have tax supported Turkish [Gulen charter schools](#), [Chinese charter schools](#), (did you know that [Chinese investors are putting millions into charter schools in Florida?](#)) [Waldorf charter schools](#), etc. etc. ad nauseam.

Should the state legislatures accept voucher/choice proposals, ALL schools receiving federal, state, and local tax money, MUST conform to FEDERAL INTERNATIONAL standards. In 1984 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that private schools (universities) are subject to government regulations because they enroll students who receive tuition money from the government. Even though the checks are payable to individual students, not the school, the Court says any scholarships, loans, or grants to students "constitute federal financial assistance."

In the 1990 book [Politics, Markets, and America's Schools](#), John Chubb and Terry Moe, of The Brookings Institute and Stanford University respectively, said "Our guiding principle in the design of a choice system is this: Public authority must be put to use in creating a system that is almost entirely beyond the reach of public authority." Let me say that again. "Public authority must be put to use in creating a system that is almost entirely beyond the reach of public authority." Let it sink in...they are proposing choice system that is beyond the reach of the taxpayer and parents!

Do you fully understand the statement? Their plan was to fool the public into believing that school choice was a wonderful idea! What the public doesn't comprehend, and too few of us are talking about, is the fact that once school choice/vouchers are passed in a state, there is no more private, religious or home school education, which does not have to follow the federal education requirements. Please understand that private schools cannot remain independent once they have accepted federal funding through vouchers/choice.

The desire for total government control of education started long ago. However, back then, we had preachers who told the truth and informed the public. In 1933, Dr. J. Gresham Machen, gave the speech, [The Necessity of the Christian School](#). He was Professor of New Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. The lecture was given at the Educational Convention held in Chicago under the auspices of the National Union of Christian Schools.

"Every lover of human freedom ought to oppose with all his might the giving of Federal aid to the schools of this country; for Federal aid in the long run inevitably means Federal control, and Federal control means control by a centralized and irresponsible bureaucracy, and control by such a bureaucracy means the death of everything that might make this country great. Against this soul-killing collectivism in education, the Christian school, like the private school, stands as an emphatic protest. In doing so, it is no real enemy of the public schools. On the contrary, the only way in which a state-controlled school can be kept even relatively healthy is through the absolutely free possibility of competition by private schools and church schools; if it once becomes monopolistic, it is the most effective engine of tyranny and intellectual stagnation that has yet been devised."

Whatever the government funds with our tax dollars, the government ultimately controls.

Now is the time to take action! It is CRITICAL that the truth be told about common core, but more importantly, about school choice, charters, and vouchers. Especially talk to your friends, family, and neighbors who have kids in private or parochial school, or who home school. These parents need to know what threat looms on the horizon. People spend a LOT of money on private education, or quit jobs so they can homeschool, because they want TRUE CHOICE in how their kids are educated.

What about those families who honestly can't afford private school or to homeschool? We need to insist that the curriculum go "back to basics" – remember reading, writing, and arithmetic? It was good enough for our engineers and astronauts to get to the moon, and beyond. Look at the explosion of technology, inventions, etc. from the 1950s to the 1990s. Where is that now? Our children are being "trained" – like dogs, to give a practiced response to a prompt. No innovation, no creativity, and apparently, even facts aren't all that important. It's now OK for a child to say $3 \times 4 = 11$, as long as they can explain their answer. Is that what we want for the greatest nation in the world?

Contact your legislators. Pin them down on where they stand on common core, and more importantly, on school choice, charters, and vouchers. We need to make those three words absolutely toxic, to the point that no person running for office would consider supporting them. We need to challenge those – especially conservatives – who are promoting this plan. We need to demand accountability from our local school boards, and if we don't get it, we need to run for the school board ourselves.