

Common Core State Standards Initiative Update

By Betty Peters, Alabama State School Board, District 2



In November 2010, Alabama's State School Board adopted the **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** in math and English Language Arts, with Stephanie Bell and me voting NO. At the time, the vast majority of Alabamians had never heard of these new standards. Nearly 9 months later, the truth about the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) is finally beginning to trickle out.

The Obama administration's transformative education makeover avoided the view of Congress, state legislatures, local school boards, talk radio, Fox News, and newspapers. Unlike the Hillary Clinton-Marc Tucker education reform plan of the 1990's, which was announced with "Goals

2000 Media Kits" and promoted in thousands of consensus building meetings, the CCSS came about with just the buy-in of national stakeholders such as private foundations including, the Hunt and Fordham Institutes, National PTA, National Center on Education and the Economy, National Association of State Boards of Education, and the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers--the two organizations which own the CCSS. Too many decisions, recommendations and policies are being made by these non-governmental organizations without the knowledge of the people. The people have not vested these organizations with the authority they have instead bestowed only on their elected officials.

Much like the passage of a Nancy Pelosi bill, the CCSS were approved in many states even before the standards were even ready for review. Arne Duncan, Obama's education secretary, enticed states to apply for four billion of stimulus money via grant applications for a contest called "Race to the Top."

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Winners were decided based on states' embracing certain mandates such as charter schools, evaluation of teachers based on students' assessments, longitudinal data bases of student information and the CCSS. In time, more information came out about the

so-called "state-initiated but don't call them national" standards. Primary stakeholders were given millions of dollars by the Gates Foundation

to promote content validation and positive public relations. (www.pioneerinstitute.org/pdf/gates_money.pdf)

Assessments and curricula are being written by two partnerships (PARCC and SBAC) which received between them 350 million federal dollars. Vendors (Pearson and its subsidiary America's Choice, ETS, ACT, both major teachers' unions, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Microsoft, etc.) are heavily involved. These alphabet soup groups have many inter-connections such as Sir Michael Barber, the architect of England's labor party education reform effort of the 1990s, who now works for Pearson and is a member of the PARCC consortium. Alabama is a member of both con-

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sortia.

Science frameworks have been written and science standards based on them are being finalized. These are expected to become common core science standards soon. The CCSS Initiative is rapidly becoming what Secretary Duncan described to Congressman John Kline as a "cradle to career" initiative.

A case in point is the most recent Race to the Top contest focusing on early literacy programs (such as Alabama's "Action Plan for Literacy: Birth to Grade 12"). A new GED is being aligned to the CCSS, new standards for career tech courses, and post-secondary grants to bring in the higher education sector.

If states do not change course soon, there will be nothing left of local and state control or of student privacy. The vision of Goals 2000, School to Work and the Workforce Investment Act of the Clinton era will after 15 plus years

come to full fruition.

Especially troubling are the mandated databases, which Cong. Kline mentioned in his Feb. 23, 2010, letter to Sec. Duncan, calling them a "de facto national student database," something which "Congress ex-

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plicitly prohibited." He also expressed his concern for student privacy after Asst. Sec. Carmel Martin fired the Dept.'s chief privacy officer, Paul Gammill, who had reportedly warned Department officials that the "requirement that states link their postsecondary data systems to those of state work force agencies violates the federal privacy law..." The letter is available here:

<http://law.fordham.edu/assets/>

[CLIP/](#)

[Letter from House Committee on Education and Labor.pdf](#)

Currently, Secretary Duncan is offering conditional waivers to states to provide "immediate relief from various burdensome and duplicative requirements under the current law [No Child Left Behind]." States should not apply for conditional waivers but the Department (of Education) should provide waivers to all states without conditions, as the National Association of State Boards of Education wrote in an August 2011 letter to Duncan.

Contact your state school board representative and the governor to ask that they rescind adoption of CCSS. (See www.alsde.edu). Also ask your Senators and Congressman to stop all CCSSI funding. More information about CCSSI including a citizens toolkit is available at: <http://truthinamericaneducation.com>

Deception on Immigration Enforcement

July 28, 2011 By Kristen Williamson

In testimony before the House Judiciary Committee's Immigration and Enforcement Subcommittee on August 26, National Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Council President Chris Crane leveled some powerful accusations against the Obama administration and the political appointees who run ICE. Speaking in favor of the "Hinder the Administration's Legalization Temptation Act" or the HALT Act (H.R. 2497), Crane confirmed nearly all of FAIR's [Federation of American Immigration Reform] assertions that administrative amnesty is being pursued via internal directives and memos in order to circumvent Congress's refusal to enact it legislatively.

Crane said, "the entire policy is merely another attempt by ICE to avoid enforcing violations of U.S. immigration laws for political reasons, while simultaneously attempting to convince the public that ICE is taking some type of legitimate law enforcement action."

When political strategy trumps immigration enforcement, Americans and legal immigrants lose. They lose not only because entire categories of illegal aliens are given amnesty. They lose because the methods used to achieve it are not transparent and run in direct contrast to the will of the American people. Perhaps, most importantly, they lose because any time an administration in power asserts for itself the right to simply ignore laws it does not like or finds inconvenient, it is a threat to the very foundation of our constitutional democracy.

<http://immigrationreform.com/2011/07/28/ice-union-president-accuses-administration-of-deception-on-immigration-enforcement/>

Immigration Reform Yielding Results in Alabama

by John Loudon

There are some very interesting numbers coming out of Alabama since their passing landmark immigration reform in June. How about decreasing unemployment and increasing passport applications? Yes, Mexican nationals are overwhelming passport offices to secure passage for themselves and their “anchor” children BACK to Mexico.

While radical leftist groups have joined with the Obama Administration Justice Department to assail Alabama for doing locally the job the Feds refuse to do, common sense law and order types now have numbers to show who is right.

Teresa Ferguson is a Mama Grizzly who had never been involved in politics until she singularly took on the challenge of ending the devastating effects of illegal immigration in her community. After getting hit and run by an illegal in a town in which the majority of kindergarteners are children of illegals and brothels and methamphetamine are rampant, she decided to take action. She began by reaching out to candidates for statewide office, insisting they visit her county to see the damage first hand.

One candidate for governor actually took an entire day out of his schedule to visit Marshall

County. Alabamians now call the responsive candidate Governor Bentley. He signed the legislation in June. Another lawmaker who visited with Mrs. Ferguson, State Senator Scott Beason called on Alabamians to get serious and “empty the clip” on the issue. He joined State Representative Micky Hammon in passing HB56, the most comprehensive, common sense illegal immigration law in the country. The law, despite being enjoined by the courts, has nevertheless produced amazing results yet to be reported anywhere.

One highlight is a provision that empowers any citizen to sue law enforcement for not carrying out the provisions of the act. No sanctuary for any public servant inclined to selectively enforce the law. Genius!

Mrs. Ferguson reports that the local passport office that processed 139 passports in June of 2010, processed a stunning 469 in 2011; an increase of almost 300%. Knowing the laws are tightening, illegal residents are taking steps to assure the successful return of their “anchor” children as they slip back across the border.

The other stunning statistic is that Marshall County, home to many chicken processing plants, has experienced a decrease in



unemployment while neighboring counties see increases. Marshall County unemployment dropped almost a percentage point from 10% to 9.1% and neighboring DeKalb increased to 13%. Mrs. Ferguson explains, “The chicken plants are starting to hire local people”.

So we see that sensible laws yield predictable results. When public servants deliver the message that laws will be enforced, people cease to flaunt them. When chicken plant operators lose illegal workers, they hire Americans again and one county experienced a 10% decline in unemployment. Imagine that.

Article from Breitbart's Big Government, 8-29-11

“We must reject the idea that every time a law is broken, society is guilty, rather than the law-breaker. It is time to restore the American precept that each individual is responsible for his actions.” President Ronald Reagan

An amendment to the Dodd-Frank Financial Reform Act called for the first ever GAO (Government Accountability Office) audit of the Federal Reserve, which was carried out in the past few months. Of course, Ben Bernanke, head of the Federal Reserve Bank, along with Alan Greenspan, the former head, opposed the audit. The audit revealed that the startling fact that the Fed had secretly given out \$16,000,000,000,000.00 (you are right, that is \$16 trillion) to banks and corporations and to foreign banks everywhere from France to Scotland.

Between December 2007 and June 2010, the Fed had secretly ailed out many of the world's banks, corporations and foreign governments. The Fed says that these are loans, but virtually none of the money has been returned and it was "loaned" at 0% interest. To put this \$16 trillion in perspective, the GDP of the United States is only \$14.1 trillion. The entire national debt of the US for its entire history is "only" \$14.5 trillion.

When conservative Republican stalwarts like Jim DeMint (R-SC) and Ron Paul (R-TX) as well as self identified Democratic Socialists like Bernie Sanders (I-VT) are fighting against the Federal Reserve, you know it is no longer an issue of Right versus Left, you can realize that the Federal Reserve is an entity unto itself, which has no oversight and no accountability.

When the Fed prints money out of thin air and gives it away, it devalues the US dollar, creating inflation that is the hidden "tax" on Americans and is destroying the American economy. *Data from <http://us.mg205.mail.yahoo.com>*

A new crop of university-backed, virtual high schools is changing the emerging field of online learning. Stanford University, George Washington University, Indiana University and the University of Missouri have all launched online, diploma-granting high school programs, and several other four-year universities offer online classes to secondary school students. (*U.S. News and World Report*, 08/08/11)

The latest from the ObamaCare front is that insurers must fully cover contraception, HIV and HPV screening. They may not charge a copay or deductible or require co-insurance for any of the preventative measures outlined by an Institute of Medicine panel charged with identifying services considered by them to be necessary for the health and well-being of women. Insurers must also cover all FDA-approved emergency contraception, including Plan B, the "morning-after" pill, but not RU-486, a pill that induces abortion. While some of these drugs are available over the counter, a woman would need a prescription from her health provider to get them free of charge. These guidelines go into effect August 1, 2012.

For religious institutions opposed to some varieties of birth control, the administration added an exemption that allows them to opt out of the coverage requirement. To qualify, an organization must have religious employees and promote religious causes. *Information from Washington Times article 8/1/11*

President Andrew Jackson, made the following statements in an address on Dec. 5, 1836:

"Congress is only authorized 'to levy taxes to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.' There is not such provision as would authorize Congress to collect together the property of the country, under the name of revenue, for the purpose of dividing it equally or unequally among the States or the people. Indeed, it is not probable that such an idea ever occurred to the States when they adopted the Constitution.

He continued:

"The experience of other nations admonished us to hasten the extinguishment of the public debt...No political maxim is better established than that which tells us that an improvident expenditure of money is the parent of profligacy, and that no people can hope to perpetuate their liberties who long acquiesce in a policy which taxes them for objects not necessary to the legitimate and real wants of their government."

He cautioned:

"There would soon be but one taxing power, and that vested in a body of men far removed from the people... The States would gradually lose their purity as well as their independence; they would not dare to murmur at the proceedings of the General Government, lest they should lose their supplies; all would be merges in a practical consolidation, cemented by widespread corruption, which could only be eradicated by one of those bloody revolutions which occasionally overthrow the despotic systems of the Old World."

Agenda 21 in One Easy Lesson

by Tom DeWeese April 6, 2011 NewsWithViews.com

Due to receiving many requests for a quick overview of Agenda 21, Tom DeWeese wrote the following information for use by individuals to use in not only helping them understand Agenda 21, but also for use in educating public officials about this subject.

What is Sustainable Development?

According to its authors, the objective of sustainable development is to integrate economic, social and environmental policies in order to achieve reduced consumption, social equity, and the preservation and restoration of biodiversity. Sustainablists insist that every societal decision be based on environmental impact, focusing on three components; global land use, global education, and global population control and reduction.

Social Equity (Social Justice)

Social justice is described as the right and opportunity of all people “to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment.” Redistribution of wealth. Private property is a social injustice since not everyone can build wealth from it. National sovereignty is a social injustice. Universal health care is a social justice. All part of Agenda 21 policy.

Economic Prosperity

Public Private Partnerships (PPP). Special dealings between government and certain, chosen corporations which get tax breaks, grants and the government’s power of Eminent Domain to implement sustainable policy. Government-sanctioned monopolies.

Local Sustainable Development policies

Smart Growth, Wildlands Project, Resilient Cities, Regional Visioning Projects, STAR Sustainable Communities, Green jobs, Green Building Codes, “Going Green,” Alternative Energy, Local Visioning, facilitators, regional planning, historic preservation, conservation easements, development rights, sustainable farming, comprehensive planning, growth management, consensus.

Who is behind it?

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (formally, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives). Communities pay ICLEI dues to provide “local” community plans, software, training, etc. Additionally, groups include American Planning Council, The Renaissance Planning Group, International City/ County Management Group, aided by US Mayors Conference, National Governors Association, National League of Cities, National Association of County Administrators and many more private organizations and official government agencies. Foundation and government grants drive the process.

Where did it originate?

The term Sustainable Development was first introduced to the world in the pages of a 1987 report (Our Common Future) produced by the United Nations World Commission on Environmental and Development, authored by Gro Harlem Brundtland, VP of the World Socialist Party. The term was first offered as official UN policy in 1992, in a document called UN Sustainable Development Agenda 21, issued at the UN’s Earth Summit, today referred to simply as Agenda 21.

What gives Agenda 21 Ruling Authority?

More than 178 nations adopted Agenda 21 as official policy during a signing ceremony at the Earth Summit. US President George H.W. Bush signed the document for the US. In signing, each nation pledged to adopt the goals of Agenda 21. In 1995, President Bill Clinton, in compliance with Agenda 21, signed Executive Order #12858 to create the President’s Council on Sustainable Development in order to “harmonize” US environmental policy with UN directives as outlined in Agenda 21. The EO directed all agencies of the Federal Government to work with state and local community governments in a joint effort “reinvent”

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government using the guidelines outlined in Agenda 21. As a result, with the assistance of groups like ICLEI, Sustainable Development is now emerging as government policy in every town, county and state in the nation.

Revealing Quotes From the Planners

“Agenda 21 proposes an array of actions which are intended to be implemented by EVERY person on Earth... it calls for specific changes in the activities of ALL people... Effective execution of Agenda 21 will REQUIRE a profound reorientation of ALL humans, unlike anything the world has ever experienced...” -Agenda 21: The Earth Summit Strategy to Save Our Planet (Earthpress, 1993). Emphases – DR

Urgent to implement – but we don’t know what it is!

“The realities of life on our planet dictate that continued economic development as we know it cannot be sustained... Sustainable development, therefore is a program of action for local and global economic reform – a program that has yet to be fully defined.” -The Local Agenda 21 Planning Guide, published by ICLEI, 1996.
“No one fully understands how or even, if, sustainable development can be achieved; however, there is growing consensus that it must be accomplished at the local level if it is ever to be achieved on a global basis.” -The Local Agenda 21 Planning Guide, published by ICLEI, 1996.

Agenda 21 and Private Property

“Land... cannot be treated as an ordinary asset, controlled by individuals and subject to the pressures and inefficiencies of the market. Private land ownership is also a principle instrument of accumulation and concentration of wealth, therefore contributes to social justice.” -From the report from the 1976 UN’s Habitat I Conference. “Private land use decisions are often driven by strong economic incentives that result in several ecological and aesthetic consequences... The key to overcoming it is through public policy...” -Report from the President’s Council on Sustainable Development, page 112. “Current lifestyles and consumption patterns of the affluent middle class – involving high meat intake, use of fossil fuels, appliances, home and work air conditioning, and suburban housing are not sustainable.” -Maurice Strong, Secretary General of the UN’s Earth Summit, 1992.

Reinvention of Government

“We need a new collaborative decision process that leads to better decisions, more rapid change, and more sensible use of human, natural and financial resources in achieving our goals.” -Report from the President’s Council on Sustainable Development. “Individual rights will have to take a back seat to the collective.” -Harvey Ruvin, Vice Chairman, ICLEI. The Wildlands Project “We must make this place an insecure and inhospitable place for Capitalists and their projects – we must reclaim the roads and plowed lands, halt dam construction, tear down existing dams, free shackled rivers and return to wilderness millions of tens of millions of acres or presently settled land.” -Dave Foreman, Earth First.

What is not sustainable?

Ski runs, grazing of livestock, plowing of soil, building fences, industry, single family homes, paves and tarred roads, logging activities, dams and reservoirs, power line construction, and economic systems that fail to set proper value on the environment.” -UN’s Biodiversity Assessment Report.

Hide Agenda 21’s UN roots from the people

“Participating in a UN advocated planning process would very likely bring out many of the conspiracy- fixated groups and individuals in our society... This segment of our society who fear ‘one-world government’ and a UN invasion of the United States through which our individual freedom would be stripped away would actively work to defeat any elected official who joined ‘the conspiracy’ by undertaking LA21. So we call our process something else, such as comprehensive planning, growth management or smart growth.” -J. Gary Lawrence, advisor to President Clinton’s Council on Sustainable Development.

Tom DeWeese is one of the nation’s leading advocates of individual liberty, free enterprise, private property rights, personal privacy, back-to-basics education and American sovereignty and independence.

Brooklyn's Byline

It's that time of year again. Children across Alabama have dragged out their backpacks, sharpened their pencils and gone back to school. The beginning of the school year gives teachers and students a fresh start and legislators a chance to study what our state is doing right and wrong in regard to education.

During the last legislative session, they addressed problems with Alabama's teacher tenure laws, passing much needed reforms. But, they shouldn't stop there. Alabama is one of only ten states in the nation without charter school legislation. For the past few years, bills authorizing charter schools have been introduced, but failed to pass due to strong AEA opposition and budget constraints. When the legislators go back to Montgomery for the 2012 session, they'll get another chance to improve education in the state by giving parents more choices.

Charter schools are public schools that operate outside the traditional rules and regulations of a public school. They are often tailored to meet the educational needs of a specific group or community. With charters, parents are able to find the school that best meets the educational needs of their child. Even though they operate outside the normal framework of public schools, there is still accountability. Charter schools are judged on their ability to meet the educational goals laid out in their charter. Those schools that don't meet their goals are shut down. This performance-based assessment ensures only the best schools survive.

Alabama ranked 45th in the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report. Two states that have the largest number of charter school students, New Jersey and New York, ranked 3rd and 26th respectively. A recent study by the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice found a strong correlation between school choice and educational quality. States that offer more options in education scored higher in terms of the overall quality of education.

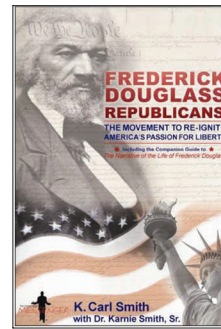
But what about the cost? Given today's tough economic times and serious budget shortfalls, the cost of charter schools is a valid concern. The good news is that charters will actually save the state money. The Center for Education Reform has found that the average charter school receives \$3,468 less in state and federal funds than traditional public schools. Charters are able to do more with less, and do it better. One significant reason for that is the lack of bureaucracy, which allows teachers and school administrators to recognize problems and make quick adjustments to improve their effectiveness.

Charter schools have grown in popularity since movies like *The Lottery* and *Waiting For Superman* have hit the national stage. As parents are being educated on the concept of charters and what they are able to do, support for charters increases. There are now 5,400 charter schools serving more than 1.7 million children across the country. In the last year alone, 465 new charter schools have opened.

If the statistics aren't persuasive for legislators, maybe the public will be. Friedman Foundation says, 58% of Alabama voters favor charter schools. Public support is there; legislators need to listen.

Book Review

Frederick Douglass Republican



This book, written by K. Carl Smith who calls himself the Conservative Messenger, is about the Movement to Re-Ignite America's Passion for Liberty. Smith writes about Douglass' escape from slavery to his rise as an advisor to five presidents to become an iconic historical figure.

Smith discusses the four values that led Douglass on his journey from slavery to service to others.

1. **Respect for the Constitution:** Although Douglass had been taught that the Constitution was a racist document, by studying it carefully and the writings of the founders, he found that the 3/5ths clause was written to limit the power of the slave states, not to condone slavery.
2. **Respect for Life:** As a former slave having experienced and seen persecution and loss of life, he was a profound defender of all life.
3. **Limited Government:** Douglass believed that only by limiting government could our rights be protected.
4. **Personal Responsibility:** Douglass worked hard and expected all others to do the same to reach their goals.

In this book Smith explains those principles and why he calls himself a Frederick Douglass Republican. You may order this book from Smith's website at www.conservativemessenger.org.



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