

## Psychosocial Manipulation in the Common Core Standards and Aligned Tests and Curriculum

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The issue of teaching, testing and collecting data on psychological attitudes, values and beliefs is extremely serious and a major concern to parents, citizens, and experts. It was serious enough to be mentioned in Florida Governor Rick Scott's 2013 executive order on the standards:

“WHEREAS, Floridians have raised concerns about the Federal government's interest in using educational standards and assessments to collect data on psychological attitudes, values, and beliefs...”<sup>1</sup>

Despite promises by proponents that the Common Core Standards are “academic” and “rigorous,” documentation from the U.S. Department of Education, the National School Boards Association, The American School Counselors Association, The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, school districts, and other sources indicate that a number of standards will be used for psychological training of children starting at a young age as evidenced by the following quotes:

- “In national policy, there is increasing attention on 21st-century competencies (which encompass a **range of noncognitive factors**, including grit), and persistence **is now part of the Common Core State Standards** for Mathematics.”<sup>2</sup> (Emphasis added.)
- “**National model standards often contain elements of social and emotional learning. For example, 42 states and two territories are in the process of adopting the Common Core Standards** in Math and English Language Arts, which contain standards on communication (especially speaking and listening), cooperation skills, and problem solving.”<sup>3</sup> (Emphasis added.)
- “ASCA [American School Counselors Association] **Mindsets & Behaviors** align with specific standards from the Common Core State Standards through connections at the competency level. (Emphasis added)”<sup>4</sup>
- “There are **many other Common Core Standards that these social and emotional basic skills can be integrated with.**”<sup>5</sup> (Emphasis added.)

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<sup>1</sup> Governor Rick Scott Executive Order 13-276 <http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/EO-13-276.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Education Office of Technology – Promoting Grit, Tenacity, and Perseverance: Critical Factors for Success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – February 2013 removed from <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/technology/files/2013/02/OET-Draft-Grit-Report-2-17-13.pdf> but now available at <http://www.flstopccoalition.org/files/F6A22756-73E4-4406-BC0F-F9E8340A37C6--E36F73DA-E434-44F5-B829-1C27BAA8532F/grit-tenacity-and-perseverance-feb-2013-doe.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Linda Dusenbury - State Learning Standards to Advance Social and Emotional Learning: The CASEL State Scan of Social and Emotional Learning Standards: Preschool through High School – Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, April 2011 <http://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Brief-on-the-State-Scan-4-18-2011.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> American School Counselors Association - Change Behaviors by Changing Mindsets - <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/magazine/blogs/november-december-2014/change-behaviors-by-changing-mindsets>

- “As we began to unpack these standards, we found a ***clear correlation between Common Core and social, emotional learning.***”<sup>6</sup> (Emphasis added.)
- “***Various elements of SEL can be found in nearly every state’s K-12 standards framework and in the Common Core State Standards for the English Language Arts.***”<sup>7</sup>(Emphasis added.)

Here are a few examples of these subjective, controversial, psychosocial and sociocultural standards:

- CCSS.Math.Practice.MP1 Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

Comment: Admitted by an educator based on CASEL criteria to be a psychosocial skill for “Responsible Decision Making” that “includes problem identification and problem solving; evaluation and reflection; personal, social, and ethical responsibility.” This is also admitted by the US Department of Education report discussed above to be a “non-cognitive,” “21<sup>st</sup> Century” skill. So, if a student fails the questions related to this subjective national standard on a federally funded, federally supervised national test such as PARCC, which is still under consideration in Florida, or some other national test like ACT that will be doing “behavioral assessment,” will that data in their permanent data file to be seen by employers and colleges and who knows who else show that they are not personally, socially, and ethically “responsible”?

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.3 Write narratives, in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

Comment: Admitted by Nancy Orme of Anchorage School District to correspond to socioemotional learning standards for “Self-Awareness” that require students to “demonstrate awareness of their emotions;” “recognize and label emotions/feelings;” and “describe their emotions and feelings and the situations that cause them (triggers).”<sup>8</sup>

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.5c - Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g. knew, believe, suspected, heard, wondered)

Comment: This requires abstract thinking and knowing children’s state of mind, others’ states of mind and applying it to the meanings of various words. According to Piaget, children are not really capable of abstract thinking until eleven or twelve years of age. Knowing states of mind is quite a subjective endeavor at any age.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

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<sup>5</sup> EduThompson Blog - Integrating Social Emotional Curricula and the Common Core – 7/20/13

<http://insidetheclassroomoutsidethebox.wordpress.com/2013/07/07/integrating-social-emotional-curricula-and-the-common-core/>

<sup>6</sup> Pamela Orme, Anchoage, School District, social studies curriculum coordinator, Social Emotional Learning in Common Core State Standards - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZMhn-9SRoA>

<sup>7</sup> National Association of State Boards of Education – *Social-Emotional Learning* - From Practice to Policy, October 2013  
<http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/FPP-Social-Emotional-Learning.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Pamela Orme, Anchoage, School District, social studies curriculum coordinator, Social Emotional Learning in Common Core State Standards - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZMhn-9SRoA> starting at 1:23.

Comment: This standard has been acknowledged by an educator based on criteria from the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning to be a psychosocial skill that deals with “Self-Awareness/Management and “focuses on identifying and recognizing emotions; self-efficacy; control of oneself; self-motivation and discipline; goal setting; and organizational skills.”<sup>9</sup>

That there is psychological and attitudinal teaching in curriculum and lesson plans aligned to the Common Core is also very clear:

- September 9, 2013 Political Party Activity for middle school students in Indian River County<sup>10</sup> in English class linked to specific Common Core standards per teacher’s lesson plan:<sup>11</sup>

CCSS: LACC.68.RH.1,2, LACC.68.RH.2.4, LACC.68.WHST.1.2, LACC.7.SL.1.1

- The now Common Core aligned *SpringBoard* English Language Arts curriculum, having been previously adopted by several large Florida counties, such as Orange County<sup>12</sup> and Hillsborough County,<sup>13</sup> is now in use in over 40 Florida districts<sup>14</sup>, and the company bid for the 2013-14 Florida statewide textbook adoption in grades 6-8 and 9-12.<sup>15</sup> This English curriculum is published by the College Board, now led by chief Common Core English architect David Coleman and responsible for the SAT college entrance exam, the GED high school graduation test, and the AP tests. This curriculum contains many controversial, non-cognitive, psychosocial survey assessments scattered throughout the curriculum that will become part of children’s academic record for life:

- Activity 2.14 – From a Marxist Perspective in Unit 2 the Collective Perspective<sup>16</sup> that describes Marx as a “philosopher, economist, political theorist, historian, and published author” and contains ten survey questions requiring children to “Review these statements about the importance of money, power, and social class, and then circle the responses that most nearly reflect your beliefs” by saying where they “Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree”

“I would rather marry someone I love than someone that is rich.”

“Middle class people are happier than wealthy or poor people”

“People that have power have earned it and deserve to enjoy it.”

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<sup>9</sup> EduThompson Blog - Integrating Social Emotional Curricula and the Common Core – op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> Political Party Activity for middle school students in Indian River County <http://watchdogwire.com/florida/2013/09/16/breaking-news-fl-middle-school-student-survey-asks-what-kind-of-a-party-animal-are-you/>

<sup>11</sup> Lesson plan containing links to specific Common Core standards  
<http://teachersites.schoolworld.com/webpages/sgmscivics/masterisn.cfm?subpage=1764110>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.fldoe.org/board/meetings/2007\\_02\\_20/OrangeStRep.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/board/meetings/2007_02_20/OrangeStRep.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Marilyn Brown – *New Curriculum Becomes A SpringBoard For Teacher Criticism* - Tampa Tribune 3/6/09  
<http://tbo.com/news/education/new-curriculum-becomes-a-springboard-for-teacher-criticism-113138>

<sup>14</sup> <http://springboardprogram.collegeboard.org/florida/>

<sup>15</sup> See detailed bids at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5574/urlt/2013-14draftsbr.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> SpringBoard English Textual Power Senior English, College Board, pp. 113-116, documentation available on request.

- “The newest program from The Social Express provides teachers and professionals with reporting summaries that are relevant to them. This internet-based interactive education technology tool ***aligns with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)***, an initiative that is already being implemented nation-wide in the public schools. This new feature of the program will make writing social skill educational goals and reporting on progress easier for all professionals working with their students.”<sup>17</sup>
- Here is such an example for first grade English Language Arts, entitled Voices, approved for use with the Common Core in Utah:<sup>18</sup>
  - “In the Voices Democracy theme, students use their voices to advocate solutions to social problems that they care deeply about. They are involved in learning the following theme related social knowledge and skills: social role models, ***social advocacy***, and respect for each other.” (Emphasis added).

Comment: Nothing in the discussion of the Common Core standards by the proponent groups has discussed aligned curriculum to be used for social advocacy. This is a complete betrayal of the advertising of these standards and their aligned curriculum as being “clear,” “academic,” and “rigorous.”
  - “Tell students when they write a call to action, they should include emotional words to get readers to feel so strongly about a problem that they want to do what is being asked of them.”

Plans to assess psychological traits in the Common Core aligned assessments are also abundantly evident. Despite the denial of federal involvement in test development on the FL DOE website,<sup>19</sup> it is clear that the federal government has a very large role in funding and supervising the development of the national tests for these two multi-state testing consortia. This quote from the US DOE announcement of the formation of the technical review panel in March of 2013 indicates that the federal government is involved in supervising the writing of the test questions for the Common Core tests that, as shown below, will include testing of these psychological attitudes and traits :

- "The review will focus on two broad areas of assessment development: the consortium's research confirming the validity of the assessment results and the consortium's ***approach to developing items and tasks***." (Emphasis added)

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<sup>17</sup> PR Web - *School Districts Pilot Web-Based Social Skills Program by The Social Express* - <http://www.prweb.com/releases/social-skills-learning/social-skills/prweb10385075.htm> 1/31/13

<sup>18</sup>Voices ELA Curriculum as quoted and filmed in You Tube video “Indoctrination in Common Core ELA Texts”: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGph7QHzm08&feature=youtu.be>

<sup>19</sup> Florida Department of Education -Demystifying the Movement: Answers to Common Myths About the Common Core State Standards <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/pdf/dmfaqccss.pdf%23page=1&zoom=auto,0,800>. Last accessed 10/18/13. No longer available as of 10/28/13. Quoted and analyzed at: <http://www.flstopccoalition.org/news/2013-07/press-release-bennett-doe-disseminating-false-information-common-core.htm#sthash.vHCgW1EV.dpuf>

Here are some other examples of assessing attitudes and psychological traits

- The Work Sampling System by Pearson<sup>20</sup> is an observational assessment of kindergarten readiness used by Florida, Minnesota, and other states that forces teachers to assess behavioral and psychosocial parameters in young children, taking on the definition of a school psychologist. While technically in compliance with Florida statues, due to an exemption for government workers<sup>21</sup>, this activity certainly seems to violate the intent of the law in F. S. 490.002 which says, “The Legislature further finds that, since such psychological services assist the public primarily with emotional survival, which in turn affects physical and psychophysical survival, the practice of psychology and school psychology by unqualified persons presents a danger to public health, safety, and welfare”:



- “[A]s new assessment systems are developed to reflect the new standards in English language arts, mathematics, and science, significant attention will need to be given to the design of tasks and situations that call on students to apply a range of 21st century competencies that are relevant to each discipline. A *sustained program of research and development will be required to create assessments that are capable of measuring cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal skills.*” (Emphasis added).
- “There are important opportunities to leverage new and emerging advances in technology (e.g., educational data mining, affective computing, online resources, tools for teachers) to develop unprecedented approaches for a wide range of students.”<sup>22</sup>
- The “affective computing” mentioned above, according to the same federal report, is eventually to be accomplished using the devices in this picture<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Work Sampling 5<sup>th</sup> Edition ( newest version) taken from video: <https://wsoz.pearsonclinical.com/wsoTeacherApp/teachApp/login/showLogin.html?product=work> at 4:06 last accessed 2/11/15

<sup>21</sup> Florida Statutes 490.014

<sup>22</sup> Grit report, op cit

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

Exhibit 11. Four parallel streams of affective sensors used while a student is engaged in *Wayang Outpost*, an online tutoring system



Source: Woolf, B., Bulesco, W., Arroyo, I., Dregan, T., Cooper, D., & Picard, R. (2008). Affect-aware tutors: Recognizing and responding to student affect. *International Journal of Learning Technology*, 3(4), 129-164.

- Experiments funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation using the wireless skin conductance bracelets on students and teachers are being performed by Clemson University.<sup>24</sup>
- The American Institutes for Research (AIR), which is responsible for the federally funded and supervised Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) computer adaptive testing platform, the test used in California, the Virgin Islands, and 17 other states, as well as the state Common Core tests for Florida, Utah, Arizona, and Wyoming, describes itself as “one of the world's largest behavioral and social science research and evaluation organizations” on its website.<sup>25</sup>
  - Psychologist John C. Flanagan, the founder of AIR<sup>26</sup>, was the chief psychologist involved in eugenics experiments via an organization called the Pioneer Fund, which greatly supported and promoted Nazi eugenics experiments during the 1930s and 1940s, such as paying for a film called “Eugenics in Germany,” the Nazi film that had been distributed for viewing by [U.S.] high-school students.” Pioneer Fund founding president Harry Laughlin said, “[w]hen education is expected to result in practical long-time race betterment, the moving picture in the school offers a profitable medium for presenting facts.”<sup>27</sup>
    - Flanagan was described by a Pioneer Fund board member as “a psychologist, trained ... when the new psychological weapons were developed.”
    - Flanagan summarized the work of the Pioneer Fund this way in his proposal for first major research project - the eugenics experiment involving the birth rates of U.S. Army Air Corps pilots:
 

"My understanding is that the fundamental purpose for which the Pioneer Fund was created is the improvement of the human race. **The general method chosen to further this end is to secure an increase in the birth rate among superior groups.**"<sup>28</sup> (Emphasis added).

It is a sad commentary on the philosophy of the AIR organization that its founder would begin his career with such a group.

- AIR is also involved in at least two massive psychoeducational data mining projects:

<sup>24</sup> <http://dianeravitch.net/2012/06/09/just-when-you-thought-it-couldnt-get-crazier/>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.air.org/about-us>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.air.org/page/air-history>

<sup>27</sup> "The American breed": Nazi eugenics and the origins of the Pioneer Fund – Albany Law School 2002

<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/%22The+American+breed%22%3a+Nazi+eugenics+and+the+origins+of+the+Pioneer...-a086064877>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/othersrv/ISAR/Institut/pioneer/pfund.htm>

- The Social Genome Project<sup>29</sup> collects and measures data on children through the life cycle and includes subjective social emotional data on children in early and middle childhood:



- Project Talent<sup>30</sup> that started in 1957 collecting over 2,000 data points on over 440,000 high school students, the goals of which were to study and or produce among other things: 1) An inventory of human resources 2) A set of standards for educational and psychological measurement 3) Interests, aptitude and background factors 4) The effectiveness of various types of educational experience
- AIR is also involved in many additional non-academic, psychosocial activities as described by psychologist and economist Dean Kalahar<sup>31</sup>, with additional comments by this author for Education Liberty Watch and the Florida Stop Common Core Coalition:
  - **Emotions over Academics:** Kalahar rightly explains that "those who write the test set the curriculum."
    - He quotes the goal of AIR's National Clearinghouse on Supportive School Discipline (NCSSD) from their website as follows:
 

"Changing the culture of communities and schools in which certain groups of students -- racial and ethnic minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth; and/or students with emotional, behavioral and cognitive disabilities -- face disproportionate school disciplinary action."

This is a social justice agenda instead of one to improve academic learning.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.brookings.edu/about/centers/ccf/social-genome-project>

<sup>30</sup> [https://www.dropbox.com/s/gh3qy9pn8d38kdr/American\\_High\\_School\\_Student\\_%28Flanagan\\_et\\_al.\\_1964%29\\_highlighted.pdf](https://www.dropbox.com/s/gh3qy9pn8d38kdr/American_High_School_Student_%28Flanagan_et_al._1964%29_highlighted.pdf), p. 1-3 and 1-4.

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2014/05/the\\_ugly\\_truth\\_behind\\_the\\_florida\\_core\\_standards\\_test.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2014/05/the_ugly_truth_behind_the_florida_core_standards_test.html)

- “AIR promotes ‘Response to Intervention (RTI)’ practices which is education-speak for Common Core's universal ‘screening’ of children and vast data collection practices. [The extremely subjective nature of mental screening and the problems with the over-prescription of dangerous and ineffective psychiatric drugs for children has been extensively chronicled by Education Liberty Watch<sup>32</sup>].
  - AIR focuses on controversial "social and emotional intelligence" theories that distort achievement differences to blur the line of competency. [AIR has an entire section of their website devoted to the subjective topic of "Social and Emotional Learning." Another name for this is "non-cognitive learning," which is much touted in US Department of Education documents and those of many other organizations cited in my Florida testimony.<sup>33</sup>]
- **National Curriculum and Federal Interference**
    - “AIR writes ‘Race to the Top’ guidance papers to foster implementation of President Obama's nationalized education agenda.” [The legal, constitutional, and local control problems with Common Core are discussed in Chapter 1 of our policy analysis<sup>34</sup>].
    - One of AIR's chief research analysts in mathematics, Steve Leinwind, has the following quote in his bio<sup>35</sup>:
 

"The fact that, for the first time, the U.S. has what is *essentially a national curriculum*, equivalent in quality to what is found in the highest scoring countries in the world, means that the focus of leadership can finally shift from arguing about what math to teach, to how best to teach the agreed upon content to all students." (Emphasis added)
    - AIR also admits that Common Core has mandates, federal strings, and they will be testing based on Common Core in one of their presentations<sup>36</sup> (bold emphasis in original, italics added):
 

The CCSS *mandates* the student learning outcomes for every grade level. Students will be tested and *instructional effectiveness will be measured based on CCSS*. *Federal funding* is tied to CCSS adoption, implementation, and accountability. English Language Arts and Mathematics *CCSS are just the beginning. . . more subject area standards are being developed*.
  - **Career and Teacher Control**
    - AIR champions "College and career readiness," which is euphemistic terminology for Common Core's agenda of centralized control over children's career paths. [This is the School to Work agenda that is pushed by Mark Tucker, president of the National Center for

<sup>32</sup> <http://edlibertywatch.org/category/mental-health/> and [http://www.edwatch.org/ab\\_federal.html](http://www.edwatch.org/ab_federal.html)

<sup>33</sup> Effrem, K. - Comments on the Psychological and Developmental Aspects of the Florida's Common Core Standards – 2013 <http://bit.ly/1mcZtm4>

<sup>34</sup> Effrem, K. and Osborne, R. – Florida's Common Core Standards: A Policy Analysis – 2013 Florida Stop Common Core Coalition and Florida Eagle Forum <http://bit.ly/1jCRT9t>

<sup>35</sup> <http://steveleinwand.com/about/>

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.betterhighschools.org/MidwestSIG/documents/Ratway\\_Presentation.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/MidwestSIG/documents/Ratway_Presentation.pdf)



Education and the Economy<sup>37</sup> and author of the infamous “Dear Hillary Letter that spelled out his vision of controlling the career choices of everyone.<sup>38]</sup>

- AIR advances the "Value added measures in education," an empirically discredited methodology of teacher evaluation.<sup>39</sup>
- An official for the ACT who is developing Common Core tests for other states in grades 3-10 such as those that have pulled out of PARCC and SBAC said, "There would be interest inventories for students, as well as **assessment of behavioral skills** for students and teachers to evaluate."<sup>40</sup> (Emphasis added)
- Psychological assessment and monitoring is also accomplished directly via Common Core aligned curriculum,
  - “The Student Observation Form on Assessment Handbook page 11 is an informal assessment tool that notes **growth and change in individual students’ behaviors and attitudes.**” (Emphasis added)
  - Under that rubric,<sup>41</sup> students are graded at various levels on whether they “Use first person plural voice (our) to **advocate ways to solve the problem.**” (Emphasis added)
  - Activity 4.9 – Justice and Moral Reasoning<sup>42</sup> contains a survey in the *SpringBoard* curriculum, which is used at least in forty Florida school districts<sup>43</sup> and three California school districts<sup>44</sup>, discussed above called “How Just Are You?” with items such as:
    - I should pay all my taxes because I could go to jail if I do not
    - people will think of me as a good citizen
    - my taxes along with those of others will help to pay for services used by all

Depending on whether students respond with a majority of “a,” “b,” or “c” responses they are forced to rate themselves as “pre-conventional,” “conventional,” and “post-conventional” based on psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg’s Three Levels and Six Stages of Moral Reasoning. This is clearly a psychological test about which parents receive no notification and for which their consent is not asked.

SBAC especially, through AIR will be using computer adaptive testing (CAT) where the questions change depending on the answers to the previous questions. The tests results can be manipulated depending on the need of those in charge to make the test scores look better or worse, to inculcate certain attitudes or behaviors by not letting the student continue until he has answered a certain way all without the parent, the teacher or policy makers knowing what is happening. This creates stress, uncertainty, manipulation, makes the tests useless for the much ballyhooed comparisons across state lines or for improving learning, because no one ever sees the actual questions or results.

In fact, John Cohen, president of assessment for AIR admitted<sup>45</sup> that CAT is more about accountability than for the students:

“When you are using the test for accountability, **you’re not really using it to measure the kid**, but you are using it to measure the school or the teacher or the district. (Emphasis added)”

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<sup>37</sup> [www.ncee.org](http://www.ncee.org)

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.eagleforum.org/educate/marc\\_tucker/](http://www.eagleforum.org/educate/marc_tucker/)

<sup>39</sup> For more details on this see the website VAMboozled at <http://vamboozled.com/>

<sup>40</sup> [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/college\\_bound/2012/07/act\\_plans\\_to\\_roll\\_out\\_career\\_and\\_college\\_readiness\\_tests\\_for\\_3rd-10th\\_grades.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/college_bound/2012/07/act_plans_to_roll_out_career_and_college_readiness_tests_for_3rd-10th_grades.html)

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

<sup>42</sup> *SpringBoard English Textual Power Level 5*- College Board, p, 256, documentation available on request.

<sup>43</sup> <http://springboardprogram.collegeboard.org/florida/>

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.susanohanian.org/show\\_atrocities.php?id=9381](http://www.susanohanian.org/show_atrocities.php?id=9381)

<sup>45</sup> [http://assessment.air.org/Online\\_Testing/Demos/Standards\\_Based\\_Adaptive\\_Testing.htm](http://assessment.air.org/Online_Testing/Demos/Standards_Based_Adaptive_Testing.htm)



The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)<sup>51</sup>, part of the United Nations' World Health Organization (WHO), classifies these [lead, chloroform, and gasoline fumes] and more than 250 other agents as Class 2B Carcinogens. Another entry on that same list is radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (RF/EMF). The main sources of RF/EMF are radios, televisions, microwave ovens, cell phones, and Wi-Fi devices.

That [exposure to electromagnetic fields from wi-fi devices and cell phones should be limited] was among the conclusions of a report<sup>52</sup> published in the *Journal of Microscopy and Ultrastructure* entitled "Why children absorb more microwave radiation than adults: The consequences." From an analysis of peer-reviewed studies, the authors argue that children and adolescents are at considerable risk from devices that radiate microwaves (and that adults are at a lower, but still significant, risk). The following points were made:

- Children absorb a greater amount of microwave radiation than adults.
- Fetuses are even more vulnerable than children. Therefore pregnant women should avoid exposing their fetus to microwave radiation.
- Adolescent girls and women should not place cellphones in their bras or in hijabs (headscarf).
- Cellphone manual warnings make clear an overexposure problem exists.
- Government warnings have been issued but most of the public are unaware of such warnings.
- Current exposure limits are inadequate and should be revised.
- Wireless devices are radio transmitters, not toys. Selling toys that use them should be monitored more closely, or possibly even banned.

France is in the process of banning the use of cell phones for children 12 and under.<sup>53</sup>

Both PARCC and SBAC, the two multi-state consortia that are developing the federally funded, federally supervised national Common Core aligned test which will assess these various psychological parameters, have signed a memorandum of understanding with the federal government to share individual student data with them:

"Comply with and where applicable coordinate with the ED staff to fulfill the program requirements established in the RTTA Notice Inviting Applications and the conditions on the grant award, as well as to this agreement, including, but not limited to working with the Department to develop a strategy to make **student - level data that results from the assessment system available on an ongoing basis for research, including for prospective linking, validity, and program improvement studies**; subject to applicable privacy laws"<sup>54</sup> (Emphasis added)

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<sup>51</sup> <http://www.iarc.fr/>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213879X14000583>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.lesleyknight.com/AnnouncementRetrieve.aspx?ID=1024>

<sup>54</sup> COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT Between the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and the PARTNERSHIP FOR ASSESSMENT OF READINESS OF COLLEGE AND CAREERS 1/7/11 PR/Award #: S395B10001 and S395B10001A <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment/parcc-cooperative-agreement.pdf>

This is highly significant because it shows that one of the main goals for uniform national assessments like PARCC and SBAC is for the federal government to have access to highly personal individual student data. The “subject to applicable privacy laws” part of that agreement quoted just above is useless. The advocates of this kind of invasive data collection on our children and their families constantly say that student privacy is protected by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and that parents should not be concerned. Yet, because of the significant weakening of FERPA regulations that occurred in 2011, there are many people who have access to students’ sensitive individually identifiable information, including the psychological data described above without parental consent:

Here is the definition of authorized representative in the federal regulations:

“Authorized representative means **any entity or individual designated by a State or local educational authority** or an agency headed by an official listed in §99.31(a)(3) to conduct—with respect to Federal- or State-supported education programs—any audit or evaluation, or any compliance or enforcement activity in connection with Federal legal requirements that relate to these programs.”<sup>55</sup> (Emphasis added)

§ 99.31 Under what conditions is prior consent not required to disclose information?<sup>56</sup>

(a) An educational agency or institution may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record of a student without the consent required by §99.30 if the disclosure meets one or more of the following conditions:

(1)(i)(A) The disclosure is to other school officials, including teachers, within the agency or institution whom the agency or institution has determined to have legitimate educational interests.

(B) **A contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party** to whom an agency or institution has outsourced institutional services or functions may be considered a school official under this paragraph provided that the outside party... (Emphasis added)

This expansion of who has access to personally identifiable information occurred as a direct result of a regulatory weakening of FERPA by the Obama Administration. In fact, The Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) sued the U.S. Department of Education in federal court over this very matter, but unfortunately the case was thrown out due to lack of standing.

There is also the issue of private corporations having access to up to “ten million” data points on every child as pointed out in a Politico article<sup>57</sup> that also discussed one company’s efforts:

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<sup>55</sup> Code of Federal Regulations – §99.3 What definitions apply to these regulations? - <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=11975031b82001bed902b3e73f33e604&rgn=div5&view=text&node=34:1.1.1.1.33&idno=34%2334:1.1.1.1.33.4.132.1#34:1.1.1.1.33.1.134.3>

<sup>56</sup> Title 34: Education PART 99—FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY – § 99.30 Under what conditions is prior consent required to disclose information? <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=11975031b82001bed902b3e73f33e604&rgn=div5&view=text&node=34:1.1.1.1.33&idno=34#34:1.1.1.1.33.4.132.1>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.politico.com/story/2014/05/data-mining-your-children-106676.html>

Interactive Health Technologies<sup>58</sup> stores multi-year fitness records on students, based on data from heart monitors they wear in P.E., and integrates them with “unlimited data points” from the classroom, including behavioral and nutrition records.

So instead of knowledge-based academic and cognitive data, our children will be taught and assessed on controversial psychosocial attitudes and beliefs and have that data become part of their permanent records, all without parental knowledge or consent. This data can and most likely will be used to psychologically profile children for everything from “kindergarten readiness;” to the type of job for which government or corporate authorities determine they are most suited; to whether they are “at risk” for some type of psychiatric diagnosis, even though mental screening of children is notoriously inaccurate; to whether they have adequately internalized some government desired concept.

There is a large loophole in the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment<sup>59</sup> which is supposed to protect students from surveys asking about “Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family,” because it does not apply to “curriculum and instructional materials” or to “tests and assessments.”

In addition, as was discussed above, the federal government’s involvement in the writing of national test questions, the requirement to give individual student data to the federal department of education, and the regulatory weakening of FERPA by the Obama administration have combined to all but completely erode any hope a student has for protection from such unconsented psychological probing and for data privacy.

This information combined with the federal plans discussed above to make sure that these federally funded and supervised assessments measure psychological attributes which will then be kept in a child’s lifelong data dossier, including potentially a “Multi-State Human Capital Development Data System,<sup>60</sup>” is in this author’s opinion as a pediatrician and a parent, the worst, most freedom endangering aspect of the entire Common Core system.

On the basis of all of this information, we recommend the following:

- 1. No standards or curriculum should be teaching or assessing psychosocial attitudes, values and beliefs.**
- 2. No assessments, surveys, software, gaming system, individual learning system, or data collection labeled for academic use should be collecting data on non-cognitive, psychosocial attitudes, values or beliefs.**
- 3. The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment should be updated to protect students from psychosocial assessments and data collection within academic curriculum and data collection in addition to its many other problems of inadequately protecting student and teacher data privacy and security.**
- 4. Aside from the psychological manipulation of the standards, they are academically inferior and developmentally inappropriate and Florida should either return to their pre-Common Core standards or choose from among the best pre-Common Core standards in the nation, such as California, Indiana, Massachusetts, and Texas in English; and California, Massachusetts, Indiana, and Minnesota in math.**

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<sup>58</sup> <http://www.ihntusa.com/>

<sup>59</sup> 20 U.S.C. § 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98

<sup>60</sup> <http://wiche.edu/info/publications/FrameworkForAMultistateHumanCapitalDevelopmentDataSystem.pdf>

5. No federal funds should go to any state or district in support of any education program that involves psychosocial attitudes, values, and beliefs that are intermixed into academic standards, curriculum, assessments, or data collection.
6. Aside from the psychological manipulation of the standards, they are academically inferior and developmentally inappropriate and Florida should either return to their pre-Common Core standards or choose from among the best pre-Common Core standards in the nation, such as California, Indiana, Massachusetts, and Texas in English and California, Massachusetts, Indiana, and Minnesota in math, which is something that other states should strongly consider as well.
7. The AIR testing contract should be cancelled in Florida and examined in any other state where it is present and parents and or districts should be able to choose a pre-Common Core nationally norm-referenced test.
8. The Work Sampling System should no longer be used to screen kindergarten students.
9. Computer adaptive testing should be prohibited.
10. Exposure to wireless devices, especially for young children, in school should be minimized.