



October 4, 2013

Governor Rick Scott
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott,

While we appreciate your efforts to begin to acknowledge some of the many problems with the Common Core system of terribly flawed, federally promoted national standards, the aligned federally funded and supervised national assessments, and the invasive data collection by holding hearings on the standards, we are deeply disappointed with statements made by the commissioner and the way these hearings are to be conducted. Sadly, despite repeated assurances from your office that these hearings would be open and transparent and a good faith effort to really change the standards, it appears that the citizens of Florida are going to be played once again as evidenced by the following:

- Commissioner Pam Stewart has made [statements to the press](#) that “while the Department of Education plans to hold community town hall meetings to hear from the public about the pros and cons of the new Common Core State Standards, ***she [Stewart] expects little changes in the curriculum as a result.***” (Emphasis added).
- Statements were made by the commissioner to other opponent groups indicate that parents will have a mere three minutes per specific standard to make their concerns known, forcing them to wade through hundreds of pages of standards documents and become pedagogical experts in order to advocate for their children, mirroring the same intimidating process put forth by Senator John Legg in his call for input.
- The planned format will not allow for parents and experts to discuss what is missing from the standards, poor organization, and other problems.
- Each hearing is scheduled to be only three hours long, which will be inadequate for both the public and experts to testify about the many flaws with the standards themselves, much less the very important related concerns regarding data mining, psychological manipulation and testing, etc.

The standards are indeed severely academically flawed, but preventing parents from testifying about the horrifically bad teaching experiences their children have suffered under Common Core, the radical curriculum aligned to the standards to which their children are exposed, or that parents are losing autonomy to be involved in their own children’s education does not exactly make this an open or transparent process.

All of this evidence that these hearings are meant to be manipulated to the pre-determined outcome of continuing to ram Common Core down the throats of Florida families and citizens, as was done during the education summit, is a major betrayal of the trust of Floridians. Your staff was warned of the potential for great public outrage if these hearings were managed as the summit was, to come to a pre-determined outcome. All the evidence points to a plan to leave the standards essentially in place with a few cosmetic changes up to the superficial 15% that Florida declined to do when adopting them in 2010, as well as choosing PARCC, which your commissioner has stated in documents is still on the table, or some other national “off the shelf” test aligned to the Common Core national standards. More bluntly, you will only be putting lipstick on this pig without changing the fact that it is still a pig.

If you really want the things you put in your order and letters to happen and be effective, the hearings truly need to be open and transparent, you need to stop supporting the corporate interests that are manipulating Florida's education system for their profit at the expense of our children, and you need to see that Representative Mayfield's bill, HB 25, is faithfully carrying out the concepts that you say you wanted in those documents. Otherwise, be prepared for a major backlash.

We await your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen R. Effrem, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "K" and "E".

Karen R. Effrem, MD

President – Education Liberty Watch

Co-founder – The Florida Stop Common Core Coalition

CC: Commissioner Pam Stewart

CC: Florida State Board of Education Chairman Gary Chartrand

CC: Members of the Florida Legislature