

Mary Douglass, Parent, Wheelerville Union Free School District

The leap to common core was as if children skipped a year in school. Teachers have had to play catch up. They were not given proper resources. In fact, BOCES told teachers not to buy anything because resources were coming out so fast that you couldn't trust the resources out there. Teachers were forced to guess at what each standard meant, tried to 'catch' kids up, and struggled to find appropriate resources.

My oldest son was exposed to common core approximately 3 years ago. He is quite bright. He always obtained 4s on the math state exam. With common core, he obtained a 3 in 7th grade while working hard throughout the year and carrying a 96 average. In 8th grade, we sent him to a private school called Christian Brother's Academy. We have been very happy with the school. He tutored 6th graders in math, excelled, and again carried an average above 95. He did everything his teacher asked of him. Then, he took the Common Core Advanced Regents and earned a 77. How lucky for Drew though. He had another chance, he could retake the regents and study all summer. I thought and take him out of a leadership conference to NYC, take him out of boy scout camp, take him out of a 50 mile trek with the boy scouts, take him out of Nanotechnology Camp, or study all summer. Hmm...what was more enriching? Studying for a test that was completely inappropriate and that he would probably get a 77 on again or let him lead and participate in all of the enriching activities that we had planned for the summer?

I started my research by consulting with math teachers across the region. I found that the 'seasoned' math teacher who just retired from the district said this test was worse than the one the previous year. She said that she struggled to figure out the last question and that most of the students earned 70s...just like at CBA, Niskayuna, etc. Another teacher wrote the last problem on the board from this regent's examination for her advanced 11th graders. She said not one of the students got it correct. My understanding is the last question had pre-calc. What is that doing on an 8th grade advanced test? Is it even appropriate? Why are we giving Common Core Regents exams to the class of 2019?! These children have not grown up with common core. You threw it at them as 6th/7th graders! It is not fair. It is inappropriate and it is wrong. I am furious that this is on my son's high school transcript. My understanding is that the Geometry Exam might also be Common Core this year! Where is the common sense in education? There is none! I am sick and tired of both my students and sons being guinea pigs. (Also, isn't it a sign that something's wrong if most of the kids are earning 70s and you have to do a 15 point curve?!)