

## Testimony to Southern Tier Regional Common Core Listening Session

I am a retired Spanish & ESL teacher. I now teach for SUNY Cortland, supervising student teachers, and teaching a graduate level Methods course each year. Four years ago there were 18 students in my Methods class, this past year there were 6. If you don't act quickly to stop this reform movement, that class will cease to exist. And that is just a tiny piece of the permanent damage this so-called "reform" movement is doing.

When we first protested these CCSs we were told the "problem" was with the way the standards were rolled out. Garbage! It doesn't matter if you roll out garbage, spread it out or throw it out. Garbage is still garbage! It needs to be discarded, not fed to children. Chancellor Tisch has said she "disrupted stagnation and complacency". More garbage. The Common Core standards themselves are seriously inferior to the NYS Learning Standards that we teachers had created and often revised. They were not stagnant and they covered all subjects, not just ELA and Math. There were even standards specifically for ESL students. They were based on the research of scholars such as Spencer Kagan, Eric Jensen, Noam Chomsky, and Stephen Krashen. They took into account Lev Vygotsky's work on the importance of play for young children, and on Piaget's understanding that children cannot think abstractly until their pre-teen years. However, CC tells children as young as second grade to think abstractly, a symptom showing there is no research whatsoever behind their creation. They focus on informational text because chief architect David Coleman doesn't like to read fiction. They were written in a matter of days with NO practicing teachers on the original work groups. However there were members of the testing industry present.

Which brings us to the tests - this package we call CC comes with tests that have reading selections at grade 5.9 for 3rd graders, are filled with errors, and contribute nothing to understanding where children need help. They use children just to allow our governor to punish teachers. That is child abuse.

Despite the fact that thousands of us here in NYS, who care about children and our public education system, have been attending and speaking up at forums, panel discussions and meetings for several years now, here we are again. If you are sincere about wanting to fix this, you will:

- Bring back our teacher-created standards
- Stop standardized testing; allow NAEP and report cards to give us needed feedback on our children
- End APPR; replace it with peer partnering
- Stop taking schools away from our poorest children by putting them into receivership; instead help them
- Stop giving taxpayer dollars and preferential treatment to charter schools

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