

Robyn Hollander, Parent

Thank you for seeking input regarding Common Core Curriculum and testing. Though admirable to have all the kids in the USA be taught from the same curriculum- there's a double standard when there are not nationwide kindergarten start date cut offs- the playing field is not level unfortunately. My children will be competing for spaces in college against children in Georgia (for example) who could not start kindergarten if they were not 5 on the first day of school). While my child has a November birthday and started kindergarten at age 4. Additionally, I understand that every child who is learning the common core curriculum in the USA is NOT taking the same standard tests to show whether or not they are in fact on the same playing field. What I do believe is that there is an inherent problem with the curriculum. One year, my now 6th grade daughter told me there were fewer than 5 kids in her class not pulled out for something-if so many kids need special services- the curriculum must not be age appropriate. Parents shouldn't have to spend so much \$ on tutors to assure that their (very intelligent) children pass a subject. So I am certainly unhappy with the common core curriculum. Additionally, I completely disagree with any use of test scores to measure the value added that a teacher gives. It's like measuring the skill of a dentist by the number of cavities their clients have. There are so many externalities that determine the success or failure of children and teachers on these standard tests. It is resulting in very capable young adults not choosing education as a career, or causing good educators to retire early. Lastly, the media should be ashamed of their coverage of this topic as to why I should "choose to refuse" or "opt out" of the tests, I grew up in NYC and attended elementary and middle school in the 1970s-1980s and took statewide tests (math and reading) every year, but there was no "hoopla" about it. What all this coverage does is make the kids /parents confused and crazed about these tests. It takes a kid like mine- who was not anxious about the tests last year until she walked into school and heard everyone (teachers and students) talking about opting out, hysterical.