

## **JoAnne Kucerak, Teacher, Utica City School District**

I am a second career Music teacher with 17 years experience. I have watched Common Core come in, and I hope I will watch it go, or at least become more user friendly for both children and teachers, alike.

The buzz words I hear all the time since CC has come to be are "RIGOR" AND "HOTS" questions, formative assessments, summative assessments, benchmark testing, IReady testing and creating data, data, data. Teachers are forced to constantly create data, organize data, and assess data to please people they will never meet and who don't care one thing about the students they deal with daily. But do these teachers have time to teach? Of course not. There is always another test to take. How helpful can data be if it is collected when students don't have the time to learn the content? Even if you do have a couple of minutes to teach, when you are not testing, the content isn't age appropriate. I suspect that the folks who put common core together, and probably made a lot of money doing it, are folks who have PhD's in one thing or another. Most students will not get PhD's in their lifetime. They don't think like folks with PhD's. You have to ask yourself just how useful is it to elementary students to know about Greek Gods who eat their children?? Or for first graders to "deeply" know about Mesopotamia when they don't know where downtown is or when last week was, much less deal with an ancient civilization. It's crazy.

Unrelenting testing, while running students over with questionable curriculum at a pace they cannot handle is a recipe for disaster. I teach elementary students, but even middle and high school students are asked to work at such a pace that I doubt little, if anything, is deeply retained. Much of what is taught seems to be solely for the creation of data. Test them some more. I believe that in the 180 days that students are in school, they are now subjected to well over 220-230. The people who came up with common core would be sitting in a corner crying if they had to face this gauntlet daily.

Children are not short adults, nor short PhD candidates. They need time and developmentally appropriate topics, time for learning social skills, time to play to develop their brains properly through physical activities, as well as reducing the unrelenting stress brought on by never-ending testing for the sake of data creation.

Do you know that Japan has the highest rate of CHILD suicide??? Do you know that studies have found that most of those suicides are related to children returning to school and all the pressure it brings with it? Keep up all this crazy common core stuff, and we might be right up there with them.

What kind of legacy is that for our educational system??