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As a parent and as an educator, I urge you to consider the developmental appropriateness of the standards. If the goal really is to prepare learners for College and Careers, this test driven curriculum has failed as evidenced in the most recent NAEP report. It has further widened the achievement gap.

Children who go to elite private schools, are not subjected to a narrowed curriculum which has been the result of the CCSS. Schools like the LAB school, where Arnie Duncan's children now go with my niece, don't start this type of academic instruction until the children are developmentally ready. A problem with these standards is that they neglect the cultivation of the social emotional development of children, which is critical to student achievement.

These standards have created a toxic learning environment in some of our neediest districts where there are high concentrations of poverty, learners with special needs and ELLs whose needs have been marginalized by the demands of the Common Core.

My own 3rd grade daughter has cried at the table doing math module homework. She has said that she is stupid because she struggles to use sentences to explain the strategic use of the commutative and distributive properties as prescribed by the modules without the proper scaffolding that would include sentence stems and a word bank to give the explanation.

How do you think this translates in the lives of our neediest students for whom we hope to close the achievement gap?

Our children should be held to research based standards that are developmentally appropriate and that cultivate the whole child. There is a body of research that supports the importance of students feeling connected to their schools and learning. (Carol Dweck)

The standards and modules should have been vetted and rolled out grade by grade starting in kindergarten. Both should have been piloted first, instead of immediately rolled out and then modified.

I would like to address is the simultaneous roll out of the APPR plan with the CCSS. At a network training, the fellows lamented that teachers are misinterpreting the standards and neglecting other content areas for the sake of literacy and math instruction. What did you think was going to happen to the curriculum when you put forth an evaluation model that heavily hinges on standardized testing? Jobs are on the line based on flawed tests with unrealistic cut scores. It has bred a culture of fear in many schools that is too often transferred through to the students via a narrowed curriculum. End the madness of tying evaluations to standardized tests. Particularly now that students know the tests don't count for them as per our Governor's statements. The tests have been virtually invalidated.

We need to cultivate critical and divergent thinkers who will develop their own passions; who will rise to the demands of the work place and serve our communities, not a generation of ABCD thinkers.

Curriculum should fit the needs of the learners. Our children shouldn't be set up to fail.