

Helen Matz, Parent

"Let me first start by saying I was happy to read the article in the Sunday Times Union regarding the public meeting that was held to discuss the Common Core. The reason for this is that I was very disappointed when I heard that the meeting was taking place at 4:00 in the afternoon, a time when most parents are still working. It was unfortunate that I wasn't able to engage in a meaningful discussion at the time it was held.

I am the parent of two seniors and a 6th grader in the North Colonie school district. My seniors will be the first graduating class to have had the full 4 years of Common Core instruction. I must admit that they seemed unfazed by this change in curriculum and are applying to excellent colleges. I am relieved that the Common Core didn't begin while they were in elementary school and here is the reason why. I stopped being able to help my 11 year old with his homework in 3rd grade. It is frustrating to him and me when he is struggling with his math and I can only show him the way I learned years ago. We can come up with the correct answer, but we both know he will need to use the strategies and techniques taught in school as opposed to "the old way" that I learned. Luckily, those situations have been few and far between and, when they occur, he will go into school and receive extra help from his teachers. When my twins went through elementary school I needed to help one of them every single day, especially in math, as he struggled to understand the concepts. I don't know what would have happened or what his test scores would have been if he had to learn the Common Core way and I wasn't able to sit with him everyday. From the time my twins started kindergarten all any parents heard was how we were to partner with the school to help our children succeed. With my 6th grader there is no partnering because I simply can't help him. He and I feel the frustration that this brings and I find it very unfortunate."