

Richard Putorti, Teacher, Scotia-Glenville CSD

The implementation of Common Core has been a complete and total disaster. It has done more harm than good. So much damage has been done in such short time. It has been far more about testing and teacher evaluation than it has been about effectively evaluating program and focusing on students. Distrust in educational leaders at the state level is exceedingly high and the name Common Core is now synonymous with bureaucracy, tears, frustration, governmental top down control and politics. Teachers are now eager to leave the profession, as the numbers eager to replace them are beginning to dwindle. We need to start over, seek input, slow down, and bring all stakeholders together at the table. Improving student outcomes and changing dreadful statistics about high school graduation rates can not be achieved by simply raising the stakes for those in the trenches. Creativity and solution driven discussions have been silenced and replaced by a "accept it or be forced out" approach. Rigor and relevance should be no more important than life-long learning and artistic and creative expression. Teaching has been overtaken by testing. Scores outweigh students. Seek to support teachers rather than to defeat them. Perhaps rather than focusing on Common Core where the curriculum reigns supreme, we focus on a Common Ground that parents, state leaders, students and parents can agree upon. Together we can make education a priority in American homes, provide needed resources to fight the societal and economic obstacles to student learning, provide guidance and training to develop age-appropriate strategies to teach needed 21st century skills. I hope that this invitation to comment is the beginning of a new dialogue, an open, on-going conversation that produces a fresh start and a vehicle for continuing success in the education of students in New York State - our kids!