

## **Carol Williams, Teacher, Private School**

"I am writing as a parent, music teacher and former student in the public school system. I have found over the years that the teachers in the public school are dedicated, passionate and diligent in their work. In the past few years many handicaps have arisen which have been a challenge in maintaining their programs. I do not think that it is the fault of the teachers that funding has been cut. I do not think it is the fault of the teachers that parents have become so busy that they don't have time to raise their children. I do not think it is the fault of the teachers that children are overcommitted to special activities and overdue the electronic media. I do not think that it is the fault in the teachers that the school population has decreased, leading to cuts in many areas.

I do think that teachers are being used as a scapegoat for problems that are beyond their control. I also think that the common core as it is being implemented takes away from teacher time spent on students. It also limits the creativity of the teacher in approaching lessons. Over regulation always ends up stifling options for student learning styles by narrowing the parameters of content and presentation. With our rapidly changing technology, the last thing we need is to discourage creativity and individuality. The common core should at most be a basic guideline and suggestion to teachers of what should be covered in order that their students will be prepared to succeed in school and in life. I predict a mass departure from the public school system if these objections are not taken seriously. Already, many have left because religious freedom has been compromised in the school. Now educational freedom is being compromised.

The other thing that is disturbing is that I believe that there are gross misuses of power and finances that are taking place. In the area of textbooks, I have heard many stories about the replacement of perfectly good textbooks because they do not fit the common core. It is ridiculous to think that changing a whole math curriculum and throwing out everything in the past for one new approach is going to solve the problems students have in math. Math should be approached different ways for different kids. It is a way to sell textbooks. It is wasteful. It is not really in the best interest of students or the best use of our most precious resource, teachers. I also think that making the common core so very controlled is setting the stage for government control over everything that is taught. We are a melting pot in the US. We have different cultures and religions. I absolutely agree with treating people with respect and kindness. However, I do not believe we will always agree on everything or that we should all be forced into being the same. Religious convictions should be respected as well as racial and gender decisions."