

Chair Doherty, Members of the Committee,

My name is Suzanne Kennedy, 4110 SW Perkins Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801

I am a former middle school teacher with a master's degree in curriculum and instruction, and a current mother of three elementary aged children.

I am speaking today in support of HB2835. Common core is not good for our children.

Common Core Standards, and the resulting high stakes tests narrow the curriculum, thereby denying my children the opportunity of a well-rounded education. In Pendleton, the teacher's schedules at the elementary level are scripted down to the minute. Our children spend all day long on reading and math, with virtually no time for anything else. There are no field trips, no assemblies, and no hands-on science. What little social studies there is, becomes only reading.

Common Core's math methods are not research based. They are big on teaching the why before the how, even when it isn't necessary or advisable. The abstract reasoning that Common Core demands of young children is contained in a part of the brain that isn't yet developed. Try asking an 8 year old boy the why behind his actions. Why did you hit your brother? Why did you draw on the wall? They can't tell you! Asking a child to explain why $2 + 2$ is 4 is comparable to asking a 3 month old baby to crawl...it isn't physically possible.

The implementation of the Common Core Standards comes very close to breaking (and in my mind, does break) at least 3 federal laws. The federal government isn't allowed to have any say over curriculum, textbooks, or other materials. However, Race to the Top coerced states into adopting these standards, and because the standards were paid for in large part by Pearson, the largest textbook and educational materials producer in the world, it means that the major financial supporters of the standards created the new curriculum and materials. In addition, these same companies created the tests to be used with Common Core, and received federal grant money to do so. Part of the stipulation of receiving that money was the promise to create remedial materials for those who fail it.

Imagine you want to build a house. You're deciding between 2 contractors. One builds the normal way, and the other has a new, never tried before way of building. He says that the people who paid him to invent it will sell you the materials...special materials you can't get anywhere else. And, if your house falls down, they'll sell you what you need to fix it! Laughable. That's Common Core.

It is unconscionable that our children are being subjected to this enormous and dangerous educational experiment.

Please support HB2835 and give educational control back to the state and local school districts where it belongs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.