

American Students Are Failing; You Can Thank Public Schools

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New standardized test scores have been released, and U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos called the results of the federally mandated National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam “devastating.”

“For the third time in a row since Common Core was fully phased in nationwide, U.S. student test scores on the nation’s broadest and most respected test have dropped, a reversal of an upward trend between 1990 and 2015,” reports Joy Pullmann of The Federalist. “Further, the class of 2019, the first to experience all four high school years under Common Core, is the worst-prepared for college in 15 years, according to a new report.”



The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a set of national academic standards dictating what students should know at the end of each grade level. Common Core was, as Pullmann notes, “implemented starting in 2010 without approval from nearly any legislative body and over waves of bipartisan citizen protests.”

Now, DeVos announced (and the test scores show), “This country is in a student achievement crisis, and over the past decade it has continued to worsen, especially for our most vulnerable students. Two out of three of our nation’s children aren’t proficient readers. In fact, fourth grade reading declined in 17 states, and eighth grade reading declined in 31.”

Common Core’s failure has been so epic that even Diane Ravitch, notorious government school champion and school choice opponent, declared in The New York Times that “The Common Core Costs Billions and Hurts Students.” The Gates Foundation, too, which served as an initial financial backer of the standards, admitted the implementation of CCSS did not go as planned.

So now what? We have “devastating” proof that our nation’s children are increasingly ill-prepared for college and life outside of their local government school classroom. While several states have made moves to repeal CCSS, most have simply rebranded the toxic standards to sweep the real problem under the rug—the problem being a one-size-fits-all method of teaching students, each one with varying needs and skills, can never be successful.

Government bureaucrats, however, despite overwhelming evidence showing how disastrous CCSS has been, will never admit the system is flawed. Believing that a big government program will solve our nation’s problems is a prerequisite to be a government bureaucrat. A contrary admittance would fly in the face of what they’ve built their careers and entire lives around, regardless of whether acknowledging the virtues of an alternative system would mean higher test scores and more successful and happier lives for our nation’s children, and our nation as a whole.

The silver lining in all of this is that even though too many government officials couldn't care less about the well-being of our children, their parents care a great deal. Parents want their children to learn, be safe, happy, and successful, and when they realize a public school education, where CCSS is mandated, is not serving their children, they will seek to have their children educated elsewhere. Parents want a choice in where and how their children are educated. Children want options, too. If the whacky way in which Common Core forces teachers to teach math isn't working for a child, that child's parent should have the ability to find an alternative method that does work. School choice, unlike CCSS, is simple, and, also unlike CCSS, it works.

The NAEP results show government mandates on the education system are counterproductive. Our children are failing, and our country will pay the ultimate price for the federal scheme to take away the local control of curriculum.

After this massive failure. Our nation must end this federal boondoggle that has cost billions and harmed our children. Perhaps it is time to end the meddling of the federal department of education and put the states back in charge. Another case of the federal government overstepping their place.

Let the states be laboratories of change. Take what is proven and use it in other states. The United States used to be a leader in education and should be again. It will never lead as long as we have common core. We are better than this. ≡

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