My Child Is Not Common

by Phyllis Schlafly

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"My Child Is Not Common" are the words on the attention-getting signs carried by a group of white and African-American mothers protesting the adoption of the aggressively promoted Common Core standards. Common Core is scheduled to take over the testing of all U.S. kids, pre-K to 12, but parents are saying "no way" in every way they can.

Common Core was rapidly adopted by 44 states and the District of Columbia before any read the standards. Four states rejected it from the outset: Alaska, Nebraska, Texas and Virginia.

Those of us who have been speaking and writing against national control of education for years are amazed at the way parents are coming out of their kitchens to protest. None of the previous attempts by the progressives to nationalize public school curriculum created anything like this kind of grassroots uprising.

Bad education fads started some fifty years ago with Whole Language, which cheated generations of school kids out of learning how to read English by phonics. Call the roll of the fads that followed: Values Clarification, Goals 2000, Outcome-Based Education, School-Based Clinics, Sex Ed, Suicide Ed, Self-Esteem Ed, New Math, History Standards, School to Work, Race to the Top, and No Child Left Behind.

Our powerful and erudite articles against all those fads never aroused the angst caused by Common Core. Those of us who for years have been criticizing the mistaken courses that kept kids from learning are flabbergasted at what we see erupting among the grassroots.

Former Education Commissioner Robert Scott was the Texas official who articulated that state's rejection of Common Core. He pointed out how the feds tried to bribe Texas into going along.

Scott said, "We said no to Common Core and they said, 'you want Race to the Top money?' That was $700 million. They said, 'do it.' Well, we still said, no thanks. The feds also asked if Texas wanted a No Child Left Behind waiver and again, Texas said no."

Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal recently came out with a strong statement against Common Core: "As we have seen in Obamacare, President Obama's Washington believes it knows better than the peasants in the states. But centralized planning didn't work in Russia, it's not working with our health care system, and it won't work in education."

No wonder the grassroots have dubbed Common Core Obamacore. That's a play on the Obamacare health plan that is so widely despised.

Indiana became the first state to opt out when its Senate voted 35-13 to withdraw Indiana from Common Core standards on March 12, 2014. But Indiana Governor Mike Pence appears to have backtracked and just renamed it, a bureaucratic trick that doesn't fool either side, and is a disappointment to the Indiana moms who started the national revolt against Common Core.

Pence's action is particularly baffling because pre-Common Core Indiana was known to have one of the highest standards of all the fifty states. Hillsdale College professor Terrence Moore said that Common Core's English standards deserve an "F" and even omits teaching phonics, and Stanford University math professor James Milgram, who served on the Common Core math validation committee, charged that the math standards are so "incomprehensible" and complicated that they should be called "bizarre."

As Common Core keeps plodding right ahead in most states, parents are finding plenty to criticize in the curriculum. Parents think that the math questions children bring home are incomprehensible and stupid. New York parents are objecting to the fact that Common Core social studies standards say America is founded on the democratic principles of equality, fairness and respect for authority but don't mention liberty, and Alabama parents are objecting to the pornography in assigned readings.

There's no mention of education in the U.S. Constitution because the Founding Fathers believed education is a parental and a state issue. Our laws still reflect that assumption, but that concept has been widely violated in recent years by the flow of federal money with strings attached.

Parents are also suspicious of the gigantic amount of money that is being spent to promote the use of Common Core-aligned books and teacher training. Emeritus

Professor Jack Hassard of Georgia State University estimates that billionaire Bill Gates has spent $2.3 billion on Common Core.

Some say Gates is a promoter of "global sameness of education as defined by UNESCO and the United Nations." Gates has expressed agreement with UN policies that many Americans oppose such as Agenda 21, which promotes global governance at the expense of private property and national sovereignty.

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