

LOUISIANA " STANDARDS REVIEW PROCESS"

FOLLOWING THE 2015 LOUISIANA COMMON CORE COMPROMISE'S ACT 329

FAIR OR FAUX?

Although the anti-Common Core activists were disappointed when we could not get our Louisiana state legislature to rid our state of the Common Core standards and testing this year, we were at least cautiously optimistic that the 2015 "[Common Core Compromise](#)" package of bills would get our foot in the door and on the path to new standards controlled by Louisiana. We were hopeful that a fair and transparent process would result in new and better standards and not a rubber stamp or rebranding of Common Core (CC). At least the transparency is an improvement over the previous John White plan to hold closed door meetings and then declare that a "review" had found the Common Core standards to be just perfect for Louisiana!!

As a result of the passage of [ACT 329](#) during the 2015 Louisiana legislative session, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is required to review and develop state academic standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math by March 4, 2016. The resulting standards must be approved by BESE and the Governor prior to adoption. BESE has tasked the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and state Superintendent of Education, John White, with running the show...ie creating and running the Standards Review Process.

The time frame, as created by John White, for development and submission is very short. The Standards Review process was started on July 1, 2015 and Public Comments were accepted on the Portal for less than a month(from July 8 until Aug 5)..... plenty of time for the PRO-CC people to scroll through all standards and "approve", but a definite time crunch for those who wanted to do a thoughtful review and then post the REQUIRED comments, write new standards, etc.

The first meeting of the Standards Review Committees was not held until this past week on August 19 in Baton Rouge where very little actual "work" on reviewing and developing standards was accomplished by the content Subcommittees. Only one more meeting of each content subcommittee will be held before a "draft" of the "new" standards will be presented on November 12. Subcommittee members were encourage to work independently on their personal template (same as the Portal template) with a deadline of September 25 for submission. Apparently the subcommittees only received THEIR template and instructions on August 19th... thus wasting a month of review and meeting time. Technically, the Standards Review Committee could "approve" the first draft of standards and end the review process after the November 12 meeting!!!

Is this process "fair" or is it "faux"? Here is what we know so far.

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

After some wrangling with BESE and Supt. John White, we were able to get about a half dozen people assigned as Committee members out of the over 100 total for the 4 Committees. Not much, but they are excellent advocates for our children and will increase transparency since they are "inside" the process. We are communicating frequently with our advocates.... there is no doubt that these members face an uphill battle against a very heavily pro-CC Committee composition.

Let your voice be heard. Contact your legislators and BESE Reps..... they are ALL up for re-election on October 24 / Nov 21. Ask them what they are doing to STOP CC and replace it with real Louisiana standards that we control.

LEGISLATIVE LIASONS

Act 329 required Senate president, Sen. John Alario, and House Speaker, Rep. Chuck Kleckley, to each appoint one "legislative liaison" to attend all Review Committee meetings and to "report" back to the legislators on progress in the process. Unfortunately, the most pro-CC legislators, Sen. Conrad Appel and Rep. Stephen Carter (Senate and House Ed Committee Chairmen) were selected. Over the last several years, Appel and Carter have successfully blocked all legislation attempting to remove the CC initiative from Louisiana, are the most vociferous critiques of parents pleading for a better education for their children than CC provides, and steadfastly refuse to consider any facts presented regarding the deficiencies of CC. Both legislators were "Supporters" of the "[Unicorns are Not Real](#)" movement which sought to ridicule and discredit parents and others who oppose CC. Louisiana citizens are encouraged to [email](#) Appel and Carter (and "copy" Alario and Kleckley) with their observations, suggestions, and complaints regarding the Standards Review Process.

FYI: Rep. Carter has an opponent in the upcoming election. Check out [Robert Cipriano](#).

LINK TO THE "STANDARDS REVIEW PROCESS" SET UP BY LDOE/SUPT. JOHN WHITE

[Louisiana Student Standards Review for ELA and Math](#)

LINK TO VIDEOS OF AUGUST 19, 2015 COMMITTEE MEETINGS (NOTE: NO VIDEO IS PROVIDED FOR THE MATH OR ELA SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS!!)

[Video of Standards Committee and K-2 Subcommittee meetings](#)

BIASED, PRO-CC GROUP SELECTED TO "GUIDE" THE PROCESS: SREB

Supt. John White has selected the [Southern Regional Educational Board \(SREB\)](#) to "help" Louisiana in administering the online process of review that will influence the development of our academic standards. Please note that it is a REGIONAL BOARD..... thus REDUCING individual state sovereignty when it is allowed to dictate and/or guide educational policy!! SREB is similar in design to the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO): a non-profit, non-partisan, but heavily pro-CC biased organization

that is financed by the architects and funders of the Common Core Initiative. John White serves on [the Board](#) of both of these organizations.

The SREB [funders](#) include: Bill Gates, the US Department of Education (USDOE), and the Pearson Foundation..... the biggest architects, pushers, financiers, and beneficiaries of Common Core !!!

The Bill and Melinda Gates foundation alone has given [grants](#) totaling more than \$10 Million to SREB since 2010 specifically for programs to implement Common Core (ie their "College and Career" grants). In fact, SREB has a long relationship with Gates money and "initiated in 2008 with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation — the SREB multi-year project called [Strengthening Statewide College/Career Readiness Initiatives](#). " Bill Gates stands to make \$\$\$ BILLIONS from a "common" education market

Everyone knows that without the USDOE's enticement of [Race to the Top Grants](#) and requirements, we would not have the Common Core Initiative in most states.

The Pearson Foundation is the "non-profit" arm of [Pearson, INC](#) which provides instructional curriculum, services, assessments—and the technology to deliver them from PreK to higher education... and stands to make Billions of dollars in profit from its promotion and supply of "CC aligned" materials.

During the [August 19, 2015](#) meeting of the "Standards Review" Committees, SREB was given almost an hour to review their interpretation of the [Public Comment Portal](#) results (a template where commenters were allowed to simply "approve" of a CC standards with no comment required , OR "disapprove" as long as they also successfully completed a process that required a discussion of deficits, rewriting the standard, and/or placing it in a different grade level.) SREB reviewer, Erin Conley, even remarked that the portal was 'funny' in that it sometimes didn't work and failed to properly display many of the " algebra standards" for comment. No fix for these deficiencies was requested by the Committee nor offered by SREB . Note: during the Public Comment session, many complained of technical problems with the Portal and expressed concerns that the "template" provided was biased in that it allowed the system to discount "votes" against CC.

An email from LA Sen. Francis Thompson, an SREB Board member, with a resounding endorsement of SREB was read to the audience. No counter view was provided.

SREB Senior VP, Dr. Bottom, also gave his verbal commentary during which he praised the CC standards and openly criticized those who dared to suggest changes in the standards. He bolstered his arguments with personal anecdotes about his school aged relatives. He made several puzzling comments such as : men leave High School without math skills; 20th Century was a lost decade for males; teachers have a "tendency to let males off the hook in reading complex text"; we need the 70% ELA requirement for informational texts because citizens face more complex tasks like having to read an insurance policy; and insinuations that teachers did not teach reading and writing BEFORE the CC standards were implemented. No counter view to Dr. Bottom's was provided to the Committees.

REVIEW OF MORNING AGENDA FOR AUGUST 19 MEETING

Intro by Committee Chair Regina Sanford set expectations for the development of the best standards for our students, building Louisiana standards, and the mention that there is no limitation on the changes to our current standards inherent in the review process.

The first hour of the meeting was mostly a tedious, word for word reading of the Standards Review information that has been posted on the website for the last six weeks. This same info was also provided to meeting attendees in a printed flyer format. This is fairly typical of a John White run event with needless power point that is both time consuming and insulting to educated participants. c

SREB Portal : The second hour was mostly the SREB comments and review of the Portal comments. (See SREB comments above)

Public Comments: Starting at about 1hr and 40 minutes into the meeting and worth watching. Comments range from political pandering (mostly from BESE members Garvey and Boffy who face the voters on October 24th) to concrete recommendations for alternatives to CC and very valid complaints and suggestions for improvements in the Portal mechanism for public comments.

FYI: Here are the "UNOfficial" (???) Minutes from the Standards Committee with no author cited. They are very sparse, non-specific, and essentially fail to mention any of the concerns and complaints about the Review Process that were voiced by the Public!!.

<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-standards/august-19-2015-standards-review-unofficial-minutes.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

If YOU were a legislator receiving these minutes, you would likely think that everyone is perfectly happy with this FAUX review process!!

K-2 CONTENT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

During the K-2 Standards Review Subcommittee meeting on Wednesday, a teacher, Meredith Starks, cited the "2012 NAEYC study that says the CC standards are developmentally APPROPRIATE" !! The committee chair , Anne Smith, asked her for the info so it could be "shared" with all committee members. When Dennis Burke (one of our anti-CC warriors) later presented info to the contrary in the public comments ie 500 Child developmental specialists citing many INAPPROPRIATE standards..... he was largely ignored and was NOT asked to submit his info. He was unaware that he could bring materials to submit.

Link to video: http://original.livestream.com/lldoecomm/video?clipId=pla_f915ba40-e898-4bbc-9069-0fce17f5aae3&utm_source=lslibrary&utm_medium=ui-thumb

As you probably know, NAEYC advocates FOR sex ed.... including discussions of alternative sexual styles and preferences , LGBT, and more in our Day Care Centers and Pre-schools. They are hardly a group to look to for a decision on what is "appropriate " for our children in the classroom. After reading their 2012 report (see below)..... I don't think they even really address developmentally inappropriate academic standards in Common Core. We asked repeatedly for a Child developmental specialist to be included on the Standards Sub- Committees and Jane Smith (BESE) presented a couple of names to John White..... but no such specialist was selected . We are having a researcher look at the NAEYC

paper and evaluate it.

The 2012 NAEYC paper on Common Core Standards

https://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/15_Developmentally%20Appropriate%20Practice%20and%20the%20Common%20Core%20State%20Standards.pdf

What NAEYC requires in preschool: <http://www.edwatch.org/updates07/033007-NAEYC.htm>

Link to source of info presented by Dennis Burke regarding developmentally inappropriate standards:

<https://americanprinciplesproject.org/app-education/early-childhood-standards-of-common-core-are-developmentally-inappropriate/>

UN-Official Minutes from the K-2 Subcommittee : <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-standards/august-19-2015-k-2-content-subcommittee-unofficial-minutes.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

ELA SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

UN-Official Minutes of ELA Meeting: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-standards/august-19-2015-3-12-ela-content-subcommittee-unofficial-minutes.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

Essentially worthless!! We have reports that many Committee members complained of difficulty using the Public Portal and that their comments were NOT included in the SREB review.

As noted above, NO VIDEO is available of this meeting!!

MATH SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

UN-Official Minutes of Math Meeting: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/academic-standards/august-19-2015-3-12-math-content-subcommittee-unofficial-minutes.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

As noted above, NO VIDEO is available of this meeting.

Above prepared by:

Terri Timmcke

Additional comments from Kathryn Goppelt:

Observations from 8/19/2015 Standards Review (Baton Rouge)

9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Chair Regina Stanford explained the meeting format, process and public comment period.

SREB- Dr. Bottoms spoke at length on his organization (a non-profit partially funded by Gates, Pearson and the U.S. DOE).

Public Comment. One African American man asked the committee to “stay the course,” code for keeping Common Core. Our side spoke and placed other documents, developing standards, not rubber stamping CC, and what other states are doing who are in the review process.

Scott Richard presented a resolution that recommended setting up an advisory board of higher education folks to give input. After much discussion, the motion died. University representation has three people on the steering committee, one on K-2 and one on 3-12 math. These people did not have any input with the portal. They will have to use the portal or come to the meetings and present in person. Received word that 90% of the university faculty would like to see the standards rewritten. Keith Leger, LABI representative on the steering committee was noticeably upset by the resolution. LABI wants to “stay the course.” See link below. Rep. Gene Reynolds suggested that having such an advisory group might be against Act 329. Other legislators who knew the legislation were noticeably troubled by his comments.

<http://us5.campaign-archive1.com/?u=d616f4ff223569233b1cf9025&id=5455ab5d42&e=3288b84147>

1-3 p.m. Subcommittees

The K-2 subcommittee met 1:15-2:00 p.m.

Anne Smith Chair tasked the group to go home and weigh in on the standards using the flash drive had the Common Core standards in an Excel spreadsheet template. Direction required that if you wanted to keep the standard, just check the box. If you didn't or wanted to change it, all columns must be filled in. Deadline to do this is 9/28 and the responses will be posted on line no later than October 9th **with their name**. (Teachers will now be targeted.) Next meeting will be on October 12th in Shreveport. During this time there was no discussion among members about the process. There was private discussion among small groups for twenty of the 45 minutes, which the public could not hear related to a quick review of the software and how to record work. One member, Meredith Starks, asked that the chair send the link to an article on the internet to all members of the subcommittee related to the “developmental appropriateness” of the Common Core. During the bulk of the time the overhead screen displayed a

chart for Grade 1 on standards for Operations and Algebraic. Thinking found in K-2 standards. No mention is made of memorizing math facts in these three grades.

FYI: Please also see an email from LFT below for their concerns and comments about the Review process:

New standards to be adopted in March, 2016

[Did you take the Department of Education survey on Common Core standards? Why or why not? Click here for a short survey.](#)

Louisiana's review of Common Core standards began last week amid controversies over higher education participation, a questionable survey purporting to show overwhelming support for keeping current standards without changes, and missing test results.

Louisiana Federation of Teachers President Steve Monaghan is one of 26 members of an overall Standards Committee. The review process also comprises three 29-member subcommittees that will look at standards for math, English language arts and K-12 education.

The content subcommittees will meet again in October to draft new standards, and could meet in December if necessary. The full standards committee will review a draft of the proposals in November, and take a final vote on the draft in February.

At Wednesday's meeting, Monaghan supported a resolution asking to involve college professors from education programs in the review process.

"These are the people who will be teaching the teachers how to implement standards," Monaghan said. "We believe their input is crucial to the success of any standards that we devise for Louisiana."

That resolution failed, with only five of the 25 members present in support. Higher education spokesmen said that efforts will be made to solicit comment from professors, however.

The State Department has touted an online survey that seems to reflect overwhelming support for keeping Common Core standards just as they are. Of the 30,000 comments submitted, over 80 percent said the standards should remain as is.

But all of those comments were submitted by slightly more than 700 people, leading to suspicion that Common Core supporters skewed the results. LFT is conducting an online survey of its own to learn more about the responses to the department's poll. [Click here to take the LFT survey.](#)

[\(Here is a link to the State Department survey.\)](#)

Others at Wednesday's public hearing were concerned that the department has not yet released results from last Spring's testing cycle. Blogger Mike Deshotels said that reviewing standards without knowing the results of half a million tests "was like asking a mechanic to fine tune a complex engine without access to computer diagnostics for that engine."

The committee chair promised to ask the Department to provide the test results as soon as possible.

Others questioned whether the timeline set for writing new standards is too optimistic. One math teacher noted that it took a national organization 10 years to create comprehensive math standards, while the Louisiana subcommittees have only a few months to revise the state's standards.

Each of the subcommittees met for three hours on Wednesday, and will meet again in October. The K-2 group will meet October 12 in Shreveport; the ELA group will meet on October 14 in Alexandria; and the math group will meet on October 15 in Crowley.

Subcommittees may meet again on December 3 if necessary.

The full standards committee will meet again on November 12 in Covington to review the first draft of new standards, and hold a final meeting on February 2 in New Orleans. BESE will vote on the proposed standards at its March 4, 2016 meeting.

The review effort came out of a legislative compromise aimed at settling the controversial Common Core standards issue. The governor to be elected this fall will have the option of suspending or vetoing the new standards.

