

GANNETT

Parents, taxpayers should be very worried

By: Kellee Kennett – May 31, 2013

Recently, the Worcester County School Board president made it clear that the board plans to fully implement Common Core State Standards for Education by the end of next year. Many people have not heard of Common Core. Of those who have researched it, most do not like what they have learned.

According to Truth in American Education, 16 states are in some form of discussion to or are withdrawing from Common Core.

Nine U.S. senators signed a letter directed to the Senate Appropriations Committee calling for defunding of Common Core.

Thirty-four members of Congress, including our Rep. Andy Harris, signed a letter to the U.S. Department of Education expressing concerns with the implementation of Common Core and the manner in which the federal government collects and distributes student data.

The Republican National Committee passed a resolution rejecting Common Core, stating that it recognizes Common Core for what it is — an inappropriate overreach to standardize and control the education of our children.

The president of the American Federation of Teachers (the second-largest teacher association in the United States) recently said, “CC changes are being made nationwide without anything close to adequate preparation (which is) a failure of leadership, a sign of a broken accountability system and worse, an abdication of our moral responsibility to kids, particularly poor kids.”

A recent Maryland State Education Association Survey indicated 82 percent of Maryland teachers believe significant challenges remain to understanding and implementing CC in our schools. MSEA’s president said, “We can’t close our eyes and hope for the best. This survey should be a wake-up call for more focus, more professional development and more consideration of how to implement these changes successfully.”

Public policy organizations such as Heritage Group, Cato Institute, American Principal Project, Heartland Institute and Freedom Works, as well as parents across the United States, are opposed to Common Core State Standards.

Maybe the Worcester school board needs to slow down and conduct town hall-type public information meetings to provide taxpayers who are paying for this untried experiment that lacks legitimacy and empirical study an opportunity to ask questions.

During the last school board meeting, it was stated that this “train” has left the station and is moving on. It appears many states and regions are trying to get off the train before it wrecks.

Why in the world did Worcester hop onto this train when we were supposed to be the best school system in the state — leading a state that is supposed to be No. 1 in the entire country?

Every parent should be asking why are we sacrificing our children for a free ride on the Race To The Top (stimulus money) train without knowing — or worse yet, asking where the train is headed.

Kellee Kennett lives in Berlin.