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Expert: National standards bad for education

Bob Kellogg - OneNewsNow - 10/12/2011

A former English teacher and education policy analyst is pleased that noted education reformer Dr. Jay P. Greene recently told a U.S. House subcommittee on education that the national "Common Core State Standards" will stifle education reforms.

Greene told the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education that national curriculum standards would stifle innovation and slow or eliminate promising education reforms.

"I believe this centralized approach is mistaken," Greene told the subcommittee last week. "The best way to produce high academic standards and better student learning is by decentralizing the process of determining standards, curriculum, and assessments. When we have choice and competition among different sets of standards, curricula, and assessments, they tend to improve in quality to better suit student needs and result in better outcomes."

Neal McCluskey, associate director of the Center for Educational Freedom at the [Cato Institute](#), likes the fact that Greene had the opportunity to speak on Capitol Hill about the push to adopt the Common Core standards.

"It's really good news that at least a subcommittee of Congress is starting to look at this, and [that] they've brought in someone like Professor Green to really lay out the very powerful, very convincing arguments against having federally-mandated national standards," contends McCluskey.

And while he believes Greene's comments will fall on deaf ears in the Obama administration, he points out that the ultimate decision is not really up to the White House.

"They have decided that they like national standards, and that's what they're going to push," McCluskey laments. "What's important is that this gets into the ears of Congress, who ultimately has the power of the purse and will eventually reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act."

He goes on to note that countries with national standards traditionally do worse academically than the United States, while countries without national standards do better.