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Is the Common Core good or bad for school choice?

By Jeffrey S. Solochek – July 30th, 2013

As Common Core implementation approaches, teachers across the country are preparing to use the new model for instruction. The advent of this sea change has generated many debates, such as whether local schools should be subjected to a national curriculum, if that's indeed what the Common Core is.

Over at the Redefined blog, run by the group that oversees Florida's corporate tax credit scholarships, the discussion has turned to whether the CCSS will benefit or hurt the school choice movement.

Jason Bedrick of the Cato Institute wrote that the Common Core will damage choice:

"Rather than complement school choice, Common Core undermines it. To address the diverse needs of diverse children, we should be supporting an education system that provides a truly diverse array of options and entrusting parents to decide which option best meets the individual needs of their children. In exerting tremendous pressure on private schools to conform, Common Core would reduce the number and diversity of those options."

Doug Tuthill of Step Up for Students took the opposite position:

"Common standards are helpful in this emerging new era of customized learning, where students are increasingly accessing content and taking courses from multiple providers simultaneously and/or sequentially. Parents want the freedom to continuously match their children with the learning options that best meet their needs, but they also want to know their children will not be disadvantaged as they move in and out of charter, virtual, home, magnet, private and neighborhood schools. Knowing that many schools are using the same operating system (i.e., the same standards) can help reassure parents that their children are able to receive a seamless, high quality education from diverse providers."

What do you think?