



September 3, 2013

Editorial Boards:

Ohioans must vigorously resist the efforts by those who are trying to repeal the Common Core Standards that Ohio has adopted and will be implemented for all public schools in the 2014-2015 school year. We must not let the loud voices of a few negatively impact the future of our children and our state.

Recently, there has been a flurry of activity and statements aimed at undermining the Common Core Standards. Opponents attribute their opposition to these new standards by calling them a federal mandate. The new, more rigorous standards have been criticized as an attempt by “big brother” to take over our schools. This notion could not be further from the truth.

Fortunately two of Ohio’s top education leaders, Ohio House Education Chairman Gerald L. Stebelton and Ohio Senate Education Chairwoman Peggy Lehner, have expressed their continued support for these high standards.

Ohio has a long history of excellence in education and in striving for a strong primary and secondary education system. We can be proud of our progress in making sure students have educational opportunities aimed at preparing them for successful careers and quality higher education options.

Our students have traditionally performed well when judged with peers in other states. However, we must increase our standards because our students now compete in a global marketplace. What may have seemed like high standards in the past are no longer sufficient. Our children’s jobs in the future depend on a better education.

That is why Ohio has participated with other states over the past several years in the exploration of a more rigorous set of education standards that will prepare our students for these new expectations. The stakes have changed, and so should the rigor of the standards for what our students should know and be able to do.

Our organizations support the Common Core Standards that were developed by leaders from several states nationwide and adopted by the State Board of Education in June 2010. We believe the process for developing these standards in reading and math was necessary and appropriate. The new standards are in response to the needs of the marketplace and the needs of students who want to succeed and excel in today’s world.

School districts have been preparing for the adoption of the Common Core Standards for several years, and, while some school representatives may see these new standards as challenging, the vast majority of educators in Ohio are embracing them. They understand the need for keeping up with the ever-increasing demand for students who can function with 21st century knowledge and skills.

The Common Core Standards are not a substitute for a local school board's responsibility for adopting curriculum and providing resources to ensure student achievement. Yet they will allow districts to know what their students must be capable of achieving in order to be prepared for the future. School districts will continue to have the freedom to determine how the standards will be met inside their classrooms.

Ohio must meet parent expectations for a high quality education for every child. Parents must be confident that, when their children enter a public school, the standards for learning will match their needs to ensure success in the future. Without the implementation of the Common Core Standards, Ohio will put those students at risk, and we will have shirked our responsibility as a state.

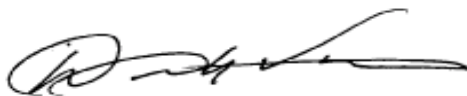
Sincerely,



Richard C. Lewis, Executive Director
Ohio School Boards Association



R. Kirk Hamilton, Executive Director
Buckeye Association of School Administrators



David Varda, Executive Director
Ohio Association of School Business Officials