



12 MYTHS and FACTS

about the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards

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✗ MYTH: Parents will lose control of their children's K-12 education under the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

✓ FACT: There is no change in parental control from Alabama's previous standards to the College and Career Ready standards based on the Common Core. Input is encouraged by parents and other stakeholders throughout the process of determining and adopting standards.

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✗ MYTH: Most parents remain unaware of the specific details of the Common Core State Standards.

✓ FACT: All of Alabama's standards, adopted four years ago, can be accessed and read by anyone on the Alabama State Department of Education website: <http://alex.state.al.us/ccrs/>. Public hearings were held throughout the state before adoption by the State Board of Education.

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✗ MYTH: Education decisions in states with the Common Core will ultimately be mandated by unaccountable bureaucrats and special interests in Washington, D.C.

✓ FACT: According to the Alabama State Board of Education's resolution adopting the standards on Nov. 18, 2010, the SBOE maintains "sole and exclusive entity vested with authority" over Alabama's public schools.

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✗ MYTH: The Common Core invades students' privacy by requiring the collection of personal information, which will be shared with the federal government and private organizations without parents' permission, and it requires that students be tracked from preschool through their careers with data that will become part of a national database.

✓ FACT: The Alabama College and Career Ready Standards, as well as the Common Core State Standards, are only academic standards for each grade in math and English. Neither set of standards mandates any type of data collection. The State of Alabama has no reporting requirements associated with its involvement with the Common Core State Standards Initiative as it is not a Race to the Top state, not a participant in the Race to the Top funded assessment consortia, nor a recipient of the federally funded longitudinal data system grant.

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✗ MYTH: The U.S. Department of Education is funding the development of national curriculum guidelines, modes, and materials, which creates a national curriculum.

✓ FACT: Many organizations are creating various instructional materials for teachers to access, just like they always have. Local systems retain control of their curricula.

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✗ MYTH: The U.S. Department of Education is funding the creation of national assessments based on the Common Core standards, which creates a national testing system.

✓ FACT: States can voluntarily select their own assessments. Alabama is not involved in the Consortia helping to guide assessment creation. Alabama has chosen to work with ACT, an existing college and career readiness test provider.

✗ MYTH: The U.S. Department of Education is violating federal laws that prohibit any federal direction, control, or supervision of curricula, programs of instruction, and instructional materials in the elementary and secondary schools, and this is an invasion of states' rights.

✓ FACT: **None of this is based in fact. Each school system in Alabama retains complete authority to develop its own curriculum, without fear of reprisal from the government. Lesson plans and daily curriculum are created by local teachers and administrators.**

✗ MYTH: The Common Core de-emphasizes classical literature and American history, and will replace literary works about Western Civilization with informational texts such as executive orders and work manuals, which will further diminish students' knowledge of the moral, historical and cultural foundations of our country.

✓ FACT: **Students will spend more time reading informational texts, but in science and history classes. The new standards actually encourage teachers to use historical documents like the Constitution and Federalist Papers. The majority of texts students will study in English class will still include novels, short stories, poems and plays.**

✗ MYTH: The Common Core violates the founding principle that parents and states, not federal government, control local education.

✓ FACT: **According to the Alabama State Board of Education's Nov. 18, 2010 resolution adopting the standards, the SBOE maintains "sole and exclusive entity vested with authority" regarding Alabama's public schools. Public hearings were held throughout the state before adoption by the State Board of Education.**

✗ MYTH: Implementation of the Common Core will cost Alabama taxpayers many millions of dollars to revamp state education systems.

✓ FACT: **Alabama adopts new standards regularly. Funding for the adoption and selection of related materials is included in Education Trust Fund budget.**

✗ MYTH: Alabama taxpayers had no voice or vote in adoption of the new state standards. The Legislature needs to protect its citizens against an overzealous federal government and keep education decisions local by protecting state education sovereignty.

✓ FACT: **State Board of Education members are popularly elected representatives of the citizens of Alabama. The SBOE held public hearings regarding the standards' adoption in 2010. The resolution adopting the standards maintains the SBOE has "sole and exclusive entity vested with authority" regarding Alabama's public schools.**

✗ MYTH: The Alabama College and Career Ready Standards and the Common Core violate the 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) by requiring the collection and sharing of non-academic information on students.

✓ FACT: **Alabama's College and Career Ready Standards are academic standards that say nothing about collection of student or teacher data or information. Regardless, all student and teacher data is already protected by FERPA.**

Source: A+ Education Partnership