

**Common Core State Standards and Race to the Top  
An Introduction to Marxism 101**

**Restore Oklahoma Public Education**

By

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**Chapter One**

**AMERICA'S FOUNDERS SPEAK ABOUT EDUCATION**

Immediately after the founding of our nation, literacy rates in [America](#)<sup>1</sup> ranged from 70 percent to virtually 100 percent though most newly-minted citizens were grievously [poor by today's standards](#).<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the French political thinker DeTocqueville commented on American education during his visit to America in the 1830's, "In New England every citizen receives the elementary notions of human knowledge; he is taught, moreover, the doctrines and the evidences of his religion, the history of his country and the leading features of the Constitution. In the states of Connecticut and Massachusetts, it is extremely rare to find a man imperfectly acquainted with all these things, and a person wholly ignorant of them is a sort of [phenomenon](#)."<sup>3</sup>

In 1843, Daniel Webster described the oratory and language skills of even children in America by saying, "And whatever may be said to the contrary, a correct use of the English language is, at this day [1843], more general throughout the United States than it is throughout England [herself](#)."<sup>4</sup>

The Founders of our country believed that the key to a free Republic was a public education for ALL children. Toward that end, free public grammar school should be supplied by every township containing 50 families or more to teach the fundamentals of reading, writing, ciphering, history, geography and Bible study, with control and oversight directed by local [school boards](#).<sup>5</sup>

The intention in the American colonies was to have all children taught the fundamentals so they could go on to become well-informed citizens through their own diligent self-study. No doubt this explains why all of the American Founders were so well read, and usually from the same books, even though a number of them had received a very limited formal education. The fundamentals were sufficient to get them started and thereafter they became remarkably well informed in a variety of areas through self-learning. This was the pattern followed by both Franklin and [Washington](#).<sup>6</sup>

The curriculum upon which students in every grammar school would be formally educated in the above standards comes directly from the dictates in Article 3 of the [Northwest Ordinance](#)<sup>7</sup>, "Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." These three tenets were agreed to be indispensable for the one simple reason quoted by [John Adams](#), "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."<sup>8</sup>

The Founders understood well the words they penned in the second paragraph of their Declaration of Independence from King George and England, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights..." They knew the rights of men were granted solely by their CREATOR and not a government necessarily composed of men that could take away one another's rights on a whim.

Their understanding of European caste systems and their ability to grasp the underpinnings of the French Revolution in real time, allowed America's Founders to warn that the only way for the nation to prosper was to have equal protection of "rights", and not allow the government to get involved in trying to provide equal distribution of "things". [Samuel Adams](#) said they had done everything possible to make the ideas of socialism and communism unconstitutional. [Said he](#)<sup>9</sup>, "The Utopian schemes of leveling [re-distribution of the wealth] and community of goods [central ownership of the means of production and distribution], are as visionary and impractical as those which vest all property in the Crown. [These ideas] are arbitrary, despotic, and, in our government, unconstitutional."<sup>10</sup>

So why is American literacy [so poor today](#)<sup>11, 12, 13</sup> that we find it necessary to [Rethink, Restructure and Reform](#)<sup>14</sup> our current public education system?

The Founders influence on American education [continued in force for nearly 150](#)<sup>15</sup> years until the rise of Dr. John Dewey near the turn of the century.

## Chapter Two

### JOHN DEWEY

John Dewey was an American who graduated from the University of Vermont in 1879 and entered John Hopkins University two years later with the intent of pursuing a career in philosophy. While there, Dewey studied under George Sylvester Morris, a German-trained Hegelian philosopher who exposed Dewey to the organic model of nature characteristic of [German idealism](#).<sup>16</sup> ([Hegel](#) was a German philosopher and one of the creators of German Idealism and the Hegelian Dialectic which revolutionized European philosophy and was an important precursor to Continental philosophy and Marxism based upon the ideals of Secular Humanism).<sup>17</sup>

Dewey moved from Johns Hopkins to the newly formed Chicago University where he left after a disagreement with staff. He finished his career at Columbia University where he wrote some of his most important works, such as, "[School and Society](#)" and "[Democracy and Education](#)".<sup>18</sup> These documents expounded upon the Constructivist Theory for education he learned by studying Piaget (the father of [Constructivism](#)<sup>19</sup>), and the neo-Marxism tradition he had learned from Morris and his friends. Dewey's writings earned him the title of "[Father of Modern \(or Progressive\) Education](#)".<sup>20</sup>

Dewey's views of education began from observations he had made during his days living in rural Vermont; children learned best by doing. Dewey theorized that the move to urbanization as a result of the Industrial Revolution took children from the chores that had stimulated learning and created children who must be stimulated in order to learn.

Kindergarten was Dewey's solution to the breakup of the family and the home during the Industrial Revolution. "The school," he wrote, "must be made into a social center capable of participating in the daily life of the community and make up in part to the child for the decay of dogmatic and fixed methods of social discipline and for the loss of reverence and the influence of authority." In Dewey's view, children should get from public school anything that was missing in their home lives. For Dewey, family should be an extension of school; a completely antithetical thought process to the traditional view of school as an extension of family.

Children could not be made part of civil society by submissively digesting facts and ideas passed down by an authoritative teacher. Children had rights, so each grade should be child centered allowing them to learn best by direct personal experience – through the process of inquiry revolving around games, projects and activities (a theory also postulated by Marxist, [Lev Vygotsky](#))<sup>21</sup> This method was also important in advancing Dewey's belief that the school should be seen as part of the social fabric of life where students interacted as members of a community, working together in cooperation with others through self-directed learning. [Teachers were merely cultural resource guides toward this end.](#)<sup>22</sup>

"The education of engaged citizens, according to this perspective, involves two essential elements: 1) Respect for diversity where each individual should be recognized for his or her own abilities, interests, ideas, needs and cultural identity, and 2) The development of critical, socially engaged

intelligence, which enables individuals to understand and participate effectively in the affairs of their community in a collaborative effort to [achieve a common good](#).<sup>23</sup>

["The Progressive Education Association, inspired by Dewey's ideas, later codified his doctrines as follows:](#)

1. The conduct of the pupils shall be governed by themselves, according to the social needs of the community.
2. Interest shall be the motive for all work.
3. Teachers will inspire a desire for knowledge and will serve as guides in the investigations undertaken, rather than as task-masters.
4. Scientific study of each pupil's development, physical, mental, social and spiritual, is absolutely essential to the intelligent direction of his development.
5. Greater attention is paid to the child's physical needs through greater use of the out-of-doors.
6. Cooperation between school and home will fill all needs of the child's development such as music, dancing, play and other extra-curricular activities.
7. All progressive schools will look upon their work as the laboratory type, giving freely to the sum of educational knowledge the results of their experiments in child culture."<sup>24</sup>

Of interest is the fact that Dewey's work was popularized throughout the Teachers College at Columbia, where disciples organized the [Progressive Education Association](#) as well as the John Dewey Society and actively filtered his ideas down throughout teacher training schools and all grades of K-12 public instruction.<sup>25</sup> According to Warde, "Dewey's progressive ideas in education have had a curious career. Despite the criticisms they have received from the right and from the left, and even within Progressive circles, they have no serious rival. Today, on the century of his birth, they are the accepted and entrenched creed on education from Maine to California."

Though John Dewey influenced teachers, administrators and educational thinkers of New England in the early 20th century, schools continued to be influenced and administered at the local level, preventing rampant spread of progressive education ideals via any centralized port of educational services. This changed in 1965 with the Presidency of Lyndon Baines Johnson as he produced the most sweeping federal education legislation ever passed by [Congress](#).<sup>26</sup>

### Chapter Three

#### ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA)

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – which was to be (and has been) reauthorized by Congress every 5 years from its inception – was the first legislation on the federal level to provide funds for primary and secondary education through the federal government instead of the state or other local entity. While it does make a national curriculum against the law, it tied federal funding of education at the state level to "high standards, accountability and fair and equitable education opportunities". The original law stipulated 5 titles:

\*Title 1 funds state schools having a high percentage of low-income students and a number of others.

\*Title 2 funds library resources, textbooks and other instructional materials.

\*Title 3 funds supplementary educational centers and services.

\*Title 4 funds educational research and training.

\*Title 5 provides grants to state departments of education.

\*Two others were added in 1967:

\*Title 6 provides aid to handicapped children

\*Title 7 (added during the 1967 reauthorization of ESEA) funds bilingual education

LBJ instituted ESEA as part of his "War on Poverty" out of the [faulty assumption that poverty causes illiteracy](#).<sup>27</sup> (In fact, the largest factor in the equation of poverty is the [breakdown of the family unit](#) and how the formula designating poverty level is calculated.<sup>28</sup>) Sadly, LBJ's thought that the

federal government should take money from state citizens only to give it back as 'free' money designed to "strengthen" state schools, should have been immediately seen as [Statism](#)<sup>29, 30</sup> and counter to the ideals of [Federalism](#)<sup>31</sup> imparted by our Founders. However, every five years since 1965, ESEA has been reauthorized. Since 1965, states have been given over 118 BILLION dollars (in addition to those supplied at the state/county level) through ESEA has supported a system in which 1 in 7 adults are functionally illiterate.<sup>32</sup>

How have we progressed from a basis of local control over local education and nearly 100% literacy rates to the point where states are signing on to a Federal initiative (to be funded by the [Department of Education via 'Stimulus' {ARRA} funds](#))<sup>33</sup> to create national educational standards (Statism)?

Enter Marc Tucker and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

## Chapter Four

MARC TUCKER

Marc Tucker has been the President of the National Center on Education and the Economy from 1998 to present (NCEE) and is one of the original leaders of the movement for [Standards-Based Education Reform](#).<sup>34</sup> He has a BA in Philosophy and American Literature from Brown (1961) and studied Theater Engineering and Technical Theater Production at the [Yale University School of Drama](#).<sup>35</sup> In 1982, he received an MA in Special Studies with concentration in Telecommunications Policy from George Washington University and in 1986 wrote "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century", a Carnegie Report.

In 1990, Tucker wrote a monograph entitled, "[America's Choice: high skills or low wages!](#)"<sup>36</sup> which, among other things, prescribed "[a new educational performance standard should be set for all students, to be met by age 16, with the standard established nationally and benchmarked to the highest in the world](#)".<sup>37</sup> He used his thesis from "America's Choice" as the foundation for an 18 page letter to Hillary Clinton, dubbed the "Dear Hillary" letter, to [lay out plans to federalize education and tie it to the workforce](#)<sup>38</sup> ostensibly straight from the definition of [Marxism](#).<sup>39</sup> His desires involved ideas to "[remold the entire American \[public school\] system](#)" into "[a seamless web that literally extends from cradle to grave and is the same system for everyone](#)" coordinated by "[a system of labor market boards at the local, state and federal levels](#)" where curriculum".<sup>40</sup> His letter began, "Dear Hillary, I still cannot believe you won. But utter delight that you did pervades all the circles in which I move. I met last Wednesday in David Rockefeller's office....It was a great celebration...My own view and theirs is that this country has seized its last chance..."<sup>41</sup>

Also in 1990, then-President George H.W. Bush signed an international agreement entitled, "[World Declaration on Education for All](#)"<sup>42</sup> (EFA), the result of a summit sponsored by the United Nations, called "The World Conference on Education for All". This declaration proposed 8 "Goals" intended "as a guide for national governments...in formulating their own plans of action for implementing EFA by the year 2000."<sup>43</sup> These 'Goals' included;

\*All children will start school ready to learn (via universal pre-school/early childhood education) [Internet search the phrases, 'universal pre-school' and/or 'early childhood education' to indicate the perpetuation of this ideal throughout our current culture. RTT Round 2 provides opportunities exclusively for new "[early-learning](#)" grants]<sup>44</sup>

\*High school graduation rates will be increased (via implementation of a data base to 'track' students 'longitudinally' over the years, called the Statewide Longitudinal Data System ([SLDS](#)), see also [Diplomas Count 2011](#))

\*By grades 4, 8 and 12, students will have to demonstrate competency over 'challenging' subject matter (These are now known as the [NAEP](#) tests via The Center for Education Statistics, the government data base on education.)

\*Implementing programs for teacher education and professional development (so that teachers could be trained to develop the student outcomes desired. Every state has professional development programs for teachers, of interest is [Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness](#).)

\*Initiatives for math and science (now called [STEM](#) – Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics)

\*Every American will be literate and possess the skills and knowledge to compete in a global economy (internet search the phrase, 'education for a global economy' to find pages of literature on this now-ingrained lexicon of education speech)

\*Drug, alcohol and firearm free schools ( [DARE](#) programs)

\*Schools will promote parental partnerships in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children (as pioneered by [Geoffrey Canada in through Harlem Children's Zone](#) in NY, see also [TPS Summer Meal Program Begins: 70 locations offered](#))

By 1994, Tucker's letter and EFA had become the [School-To-Work Opportunities Act](#) <sup>45</sup> and the [Goals 2000 Act](#) <sup>46</sup> which dovetailed with Clinton's reauthorization of ESEA called, "[Improving America's Schools Act of 1994](#)"<sup>47</sup>.

## Chapter Five

### 1994 LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION REFORM PACKAGE

All three pieces of law nearly completely restructured the public school system by changing the mission of schools from teaching to training. Buzzwords included, "[curriculum integration](#)" ([merging academics with vocational training](#)) and "[applied learning](#)" – the foundations of John Dewey's progressive education doctrine of transformational education.<sup>48</sup> Several 'planks' stood out from the plans implemented by these pieces of legislation that alarmed legislators and [education policy analysts alike](#):<sup>49</sup>

1. School boards and elected legislators would be bypassed as applications would be made and federal funds received by state Governors and their appointees on workforce development boards.

([Dept. Of Ed. Forecast of Funding Opportunities](#),<sup>50</sup> [Central Oklahoma Workforce Investment Board, Inc.](#) [COWB])

2. A computer database (aka Labor Market information System) would be used into which school personnel would scan information about students and their family including medical and psychological data that could be shared from the school to others deemed important in the student's education. ([Dept of Ed. Data Express](#),<sup>51</sup> [SLDS](#))

3. National Standards and National Testing would be used to drive an "[outcome-based education](#)"<sup>52</sup> model rebranded by using the slogan, "[high standards](#)".<sup>53</sup> ([Dept. Of Ed. FY1999 Annual Plan](#))<sup>54</sup>

4. Work skills can be instilled as early as Kindergarten with career counseling beginning at the earliest possible age so that by 7th grade each student has a clear career pathway ([Gear Up, "I have a plan for college, do you?"](#))<sup>55</sup>

In 1996, an organization called Achieve, Inc. was formed by "[the nation's governors and corporate leaders](#)"<sup>56</sup> ([many of them tied to Marc Tucker and the NCEE](#))<sup>57</sup> as an outgrowth of the Education Summit in Palisades, NY that year. The main goal of Achieve quickly became benchmarking education standards and assessments, as the goals of the summit were to ACHIEVE the goals of the 1994 school reform bills.

As he was preparing to finish his second term in office, Bill Clinton signed the [Dakar Framework](#)<sup>58</sup> – the updated action plan for EFA<sup>59</sup> in 2000.

## Chapter Six

### EDUCATION REFORM ENTERS THE 20TH CENTURY

In 2001, newly-elected president, George W. Bush basically renamed Clinton's reauthorization of ESEA The [No Child Left Behind Act](#),<sup>60</sup> and signed it into law.

These combined events, led US Secretary of Education, Rod Paige to comment on October 3, 2003, "[Education for All is consistent with our recent education legislation, The No Child Left Behind Act](#)....UNESCO is a powerful forum for sharing our views, developing a common strategy and implementing joint action."<sup>61</sup>

NCLB then, not only paralleled Clinton/Tucker's educational redirection, but continued the 'education for a global economy' mandate of UNESCO and the UN. It also contained a component added by Clinton in 1994 called AYP.

[Adequate Yearly Progress \(AYP\)](#)<sup>62</sup> became NCLB's version of 'grading' schools in order to provide 'accountability' for student grades and progress, to parents, legislators and school officials. AYP required schools to test children in 3rd and 8th grade and twice in high school to determine if students were meeting state 'standards'. States also had to create benchmarks that each student should meet every year with a goal of 100% proficiency. If the school did not reach their AYP two years in a row the school would be placed on a "needs improvement list" and sanctioned through redirection or removal of Title 1 funds.

Now, not only were funds tied to school programs, but funding could be removed if schools did not meet a federal government definition of 'adequate yearly progress'.

[Immediately, schools began making changes to curricula and teaching methods in order to make sure teachers were teaching to the tests that would 'buy' their AYP and continued Title 1 funding](#)<sup>63, 64</sup>. Here in Oklahoma, the Oklahoma State Department of Education under Sandy Garrett, former Superintendent of Public Instruction, was found to have 'dumbed down' tests in order to make it easier for students to [succeed and schools to meet AYP](#)<sup>65</sup>.

In 2004, as an outgrowth of his National Center for Education and the Economy (NCEE), Tucker developed [America's Choice](#)<sup>66</sup> – another organization geared to promoting the key components of his 1994 agenda. NCLB, like the other legislation before it, dictated his desires/requirements for schools. What better way for Tucker to make good on his plan to remake public schools in Dewey's image than to build an organization designed to provide schools with all the pieces needed to puzzle together NCLB requirements, meet AYP and receive their federal funding?

By 2007, states were deeply entrenched in the NCLB mode of operation and most education officials had been completely sold on the repackaging of Dewey's brainchild, Standards-Based reform and the UNESCO plan of 'educating for a global economy'.

Following the successes of his previous efforts, Marc Tucker penned yet another education policy paper entitled, [Tough Choices or Tough Times](#) in 2007.<sup>67</sup> Here, [he expounds on his earlier, school-to-work/federalized education plans](#)<sup>68</sup> including such things as universal pre-school for all children, [international testing and benchmarking](#),<sup>69</sup> [providing professional development for teachers via John Dewey's ideas](#)<sup>70</sup> and establishing a merit-pay system for [who best meet plan goals](#).<sup>71</sup>

As an outgrowth of Tough Times, Achieve, Inc., The National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) produced [Benchmarking for Success: Ensuring Students Receive a World-Class Education](#).<sup>72</sup> This 2008 joint project called for Washington to implement "tiered incentives" to push states to adopt "common core" standards.

Enter America's 44th President, Barack Obama, who upon taking office in 2009, appoints his friend from Chicago, Arne Duncan, to the post of Secretary of Education. Duncan has a degree in sociology from Harvard, [a father who was a University of Chicago professor of psychology](#)<sup>73</sup> and held a tenure as Superintendent of the [Chicago Public School system](#) from 2001-2008.<sup>74</sup> (As an interesting aside, during Duncan's tenure with CPS, NAEP scores for reading and math for 4th and 8th grade students [declined](#)<sup>75</sup> though the numbers of teachers achieving national board certification increased dramatically, primarily because of [incentives offered through the state and federal government](#) to do so.<sup>76</sup>)

Echoing the election themes of his President, as well as Marc Tucker and John Dewey, [Secretary Duncan told his Senate confirmation panel](#), "Education is also the civil rights issue of our generation,

the only sure path out of poverty and the only way to achieve a more equal and just society."

## **Chapter Seven** **RACE TO THE TOP**

Soon after taking his post, the Department of Education (under his tutelage) developed a 'competitive' grant process called [Race to the Top \(RTT\)](#)<sup>77</sup> which 'invites' schools across the country to compete for chunks of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds prescribed by President Obama. Four specific reforms were to be met in order to receive an RTT grant in either of two phases:

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy (from Tucker's Tough Choices or Tough Times, the 1994 legislation package and UNESCO)

2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction (from the 1994 legislation package)

3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most (from Tucker's Tough Choices or Tough Times and UNESCO)

4. Turning around our lowest-achieving schools (the plan being to make them 'private, contract' schools – step 5 from Tough Choices)

And now, with the 3rd phase of RTT

5. "[Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge \(RTT-ELC\) Program](#)" jointly administered by the Departments of Education (ED) and Health and Human Services (HHS).<sup>78</sup> This phase has three requirements that must be met to qualify for grants:

a. Increase the number and percentage of low-income and disadvantaged children in each age group of infants, toddlers and preschoolers who are enrolled in high-quality early learning programs; (from Tough Choices or Tough Times, from UNESCO's education from 'cradle to college' philosophy)

b. Design and implement an integrated system of high-quality early learning programs and services; and (the data base from the '94 legislation package would be required to collect data to 'integrate' these programs and services)

c. Ensure that any use of assessments conforms to the recommendations of the National Research Council's reports on early childhood.<sup>79</sup> (This report explicitly says that research on young children can be detrimental if not performed 'properly'. This organization also 'studies' global warming.)

Secretary Duncan says this about education 'reform' in America in his remarks to the [2009 Governors Education Symposium](#),<sup>80</sup> "Let me start by talking about the unique, historic and powerful opportunity we have to transform public education. We have a perfect storm for reform. We have:

\*The Obama effect

\*Leadership on the Hill and in the unions

\*Proven strategies for success and

\*The Recovery Act providing \$100 Billion

He also continued to say the following,

\*It starts with robust data systems that track student achievement and teacher effectiveness...students from pre-K through college, teachers who are making the biggest gains, teachers back to their colleges of education to assess teacher training

\*We also have to fix our method of evaluating teachers

\*We need to turn around our lowest performing schools... We need to build more capacity to turn around these 5,000 schools. Everyone needs to get in the game: charters, unions, districts, states, nonprofits

\*Every state should set internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students in the workforce and college...creating common standards hasn't always been popular...right now there's a growing consensus it's the right thing to do.

\*Once new standards are set and adopted you need to create new tests that measure whether students are meeting them – Obama administration will help pay for the costs of developing those tests ([round 2 of RTT funded PARCC and SMARTER](#) [two groups of states basically put together by the federal government through 'meetings' in different states])

\*There has never been this much money on the table and there may never be again.<sup>81</sup>

With NCLB fast becoming the largest education failure in recent American history (Instances of such notion abound in the literature and on the web. Both the Bush and the Obama Administration admitted NCLB failure, however, [the Bush administration favored relaxing standards](#)<sup>82</sup> as a fix, while the Obama administration [favored restructuring the legislation and the education system via federal incentives such as ARRA](#)<sup>83</sup>), RTT and the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCS) were pushed as hard as possible on the notion that we had an 'education crisis'.<sup>84</sup> Though, RTT was lauded by a few like the [National Education Association](#)<sup>85</sup> (never mind the comments of the frustrated teachers that follow the cited post) it was [castigated by many](#)<sup>86</sup> for a vast and varied number of reasons but mainly [because](#)<sup>87</sup>:

1. Nationalizing of curriculum is illegal and no matter what [Arne Duncan](#) and [others say](#), RTT and the CCS both have their tentacles rooted deeply into the federal government.<sup>88, 89, 90</sup>

2. Nationalizing curriculum directly violates state sovereignty and the 10th Amendment to the Constitution.

3. Current education spending on [the federal level is 14%](#). Only healthcare (18%), defense (16%) and pensions (16%) come out higher.<sup>91</sup> To date, there has never been any legitimate correlation between educational results and the amount of money [spent on education](#).<sup>92, 93, 94</sup> Lastly, households today get more money from the federal [government than they are giving](#)<sup>95</sup> and our national debt increases nearly [4 billion dollars daily](#).<sup>96</sup> Indebting our nation in order to administer, ["...top-down directives forcing states to adopt programs favored by Washington"](#)<sup>97</sup> would seem in opposition not only to the tenets of our Constitutional Republic, but to common sense fiscal reality.

4. Outcome-based/Standards-based education models have been proven to fail in countries all over the world and [has failed in America since its inception through ESEA in 1965](#).<sup>98, 99, 100</sup> There is no reason to think that doing the same thing over and over again will suddenly, somehow produce different results.

The proposal for 'voluntary' Core Curriculum Standards to be adopted by every state [has also met with great discussion](#).<sup>101</sup> Sadly, the very idea that this system is 'voluntary' is as laughable as that of RTT. The actual standards were proposed by the National Governor's Association (NGA) and the Chief State School Officers (CSSO) – national organizations.<sup>102</sup> Yes, both are comprised of individuals representing their states, but the organizations themselves have inarguably nationwide reach. In addition, tying Title I education money (administered as part of federal law [ESEA], not requested by schools) to the necessity to meet nationally-set (internationally benchmarked) standards, and then call participation voluntary completely defies logic.<sup>103, 104</sup> Not only that, but there have now been [three phases of RTT](#) with states given chance after chance after chance to meet the requirements and get grant money for each. States can work off the old adage, "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again", until a grant is received.

It is also critical to realize that the Obama administration has admonished State School Officers to work with legislators to pass legislation [\(\(e\) Using the fiscal, political, and human capital resources of the State to continue, after the period of funding has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success](#),<sup>105</sup>) in order to secure RTT grants, cementing forever RTT 'reforms' into state law. This has been done in Oklahoma. SB2033 was passed during the 2010 session that included a number of education reforms to be undertaken at the state level in order to compete for RTT – including the CCS ([bill search, Oklahoma State Legislature](#)). During the 2011 session, SB206 created the P20 Council (the mandate for #4 RTT directive). Using the legislature to 'direct' education reform via law cannot be seen as voluntary by stakeholders/taxpayers.



To make the Obama administration's '[voluntary](#)'<sup>106</sup> arguments sensible, a diagram was made for RTT/ARRA/CCS using the four directives issued for qualification of an RTT grant. BLUE follows CCS (including turn around, etc.), RED documents federal money (explained through each section), GREEN documents data collection and GOLD follows staffing. (Interestingly, this flowchart [Figure 1] looks a great deal like the [Obamacare](#) diagram.)

*[Please note that not all e-book formats will be able to show the table graphics. You can download the PDF version of this e-book from Smashwords to your computer in order to view this chart if you cannot see it in your e-reader device. Then you can follow Chapter Eight's explanation and points of interest more accurately in relation to the other programs listed.]*

## Chapter Eight BOX DESCRIPTIONS

BLUE: BOX #1; "Turning around lowest performing schools".

"Turnaround" monies come from RTT through ARRA, but routes don't stop there. Schools can also apply for turnaround money under [School Improvement Grants](#) (SIG)<sup>107</sup>, Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA)<sup>108</sup> and [Investing in Education grants](#) (i3)<sup>109</sup> all directly from ARRA funds set aside for the Department of Education.

The premise of "[turnaround](#)" is that schools are functioning so incompetently ('perennially' not making AYP) that they must be completely restructured.<sup>110</sup> In Oklahoma, both Oklahoma City and Tulsa have taken 'turnaround' grants for 'failing' schools.

This follows Marc Tucker's plan for developing charter schools that would be developed and run by a combination of private entities not managed by [local public school boards](#). This is happening in many [areas](#)<sup>111</sup> including Oklahoma<sup>112</sup> and is quite [controversial](#). Andrew J. Coulson of the CATO Institute just completed a study on Charter schools and found no correlation between money given by private (philanthropic) organizations and [charter performance](#).<sup>113</sup> [Jay P. Greene](#) builds on this idea, noting that corruption often follows wealth and power.<sup>114</sup> [Julia Steiny](#) asserts that school choice options like charters actually leave the most vulnerable populations (those attempting to be helped) behind; as many disadvantaged children have parents who wouldn't bother to take the effort necessary to fill out needed paperwork for entry.<sup>115</sup> Today, there are even concerns that taxpayer money is being used to endanger [American security](#)<sup>116</sup> through charter schools. Obviously, this premise needs more thought.

BLUE BOX #3; "Common Core State Standards":

Without spending great expanses of white space discussing the very poor idea this presents, many arguments can be located via the websites, [Truth in American Education](#) and [Restore Oklahoma Public Education](#). Consequently only a few will be discussed here:

1. MONEY: The assessments required by (developed from) the standards must generally be [administered by computer](#).<sup>117</sup> Only a computer could possibly be able to judge the '[higher order thinking skills](#)'<sup>118</sup> the standards demand. Where will the money come from to suit up such computer labs? States have asked these and other questions about this with no good answers. [California realized](#)<sup>119</sup>, after taking the first round RTT grant that the money it was given would never cover all the reforms required forcing unfunded state budget mandates in an already cash-strapped state.

2. FEDERALIZING CURRICULUM (See also above): The idea that the CCS would not include curriculum (the sticking point for legal eagles in terms of the laws against federalizing curricula) were dashed the minute PARRC and SMARTER were formed to create the assessments (tests) for the standards (among other reasons). This particular situation was addressed in a manifesto signed by hundreds of education researchers/policy makers, etc. "[Closing the Door on Innovation, Why One National Curriculum is Bad for America](#)".<sup>120</sup> In addition, individual states using the CCS would only be 'allowed' to AUGMENT them to 15% of the total to accommodate their state standards. Previously existing state standards must then be culled to become 'aligned' with those produced by the state consortia.<sup>121</sup>

3. THE CCS FOLLOWS THE OUTCOME-BASED EDUCATION (OBE) MODEL: As previously mentioned, the OBE model [has neither worked in America](#) nor other countries who have tried it.<sup>122</sup> (Appendix 1) Donna Garner, previously appointed by both Reagan and Bush *to serve on the National Commission on Migrant Education, has produced the following diagram* <sup>123</sup>:

[National standards - national assessments - national curriculum - teachers' salaries tied to students' test scores - teachers teaching to the test each and every day - national indoctrination of our public school children - national database of students and teachers.](#)

Garner goes on to say, "We need to stop and explain the differences between the terms "assessments" and "tests." Tests have right-or-wrong answers, and the majority of test questions are generally scored objectively. Assessments are subjectively scored based upon evaluators' cognitive domain (e.g., opinions, feelings, and emotions) and may also utilize artificial intelligence. The types of questions on assessments might include students' opinions/beliefs/emotions, performance-based projects, simulations, and/or open-ended responses."

4. [NATIONAL STANDARDS = NATIONAL MEDIOCRITY](#) <sup>124</sup>: Just as NCLB allowed schools to lower the cut scores on their tests in order to have competitive AYP scores, schools will be tied to ONE national standard that will put all students into a "one size fits all" system. Some states could improve, but many will find their existing standards lowered to accommodate every student in order to make EVERY student ready for college.

5. [STANDARDS ARE BASED ON HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS](#) <sup>125</sup>: This sounds wonderful in theory, but presents the main difference between [transformational \(progressive/alternate\) and traditional academic forms of education](#) in stark relief. <sup>126</sup>

As Allen Quist explains;

Transformational Education (aka; Progressive, or Alternate, or Constructivist) emphasizes historical thinking (process) more than historical knowledge (content). Knowledge is viewed as being relative to culture. Requires students to "analyze", "assess" and "compare" more than requires students to "know" or "understand".

Academic (aka; Traditional) Education emphasizes the acquiring of knowledge and understanding more than processes like historical thinking. Students are seen as needing to analyze and compare, but they are also seen as being UNABLE TO ANALYZE AND COMPARE, OR THINK CRITICALLY UNTIL THEY HAVE THE SOUND FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE UPON WHICH TO FORM SOUND JUDGEMENTS. <sup>127</sup>

Number 5 explains in near totality the reason for [failing public education today](#) <sup>128</sup>. We want kids to learn a lot, but we most often teach via Transformational/Progressive methods which include '[whole word](#)' <sup>129</sup> methods of teaching reading rather than the [proven method](#) <sup>130</sup> of 'phonics' as a base with 'whole word' used to identify unknown words in the context of a sentence. Kids who can't sound out basic words can't comprehend what they're reading because they can't understand the words well enough to put them in context. This same philosophy applies to math – we want kids to do pre-algebra in 6th grade, but use '[fuzzy](#)'<sup>131</sup> [math methods](#) <sup>132</sup> to get them there instead of [Saxon math](#) <sup>133</sup> concept building methods. This folly is most easily deduced by looking at the differences in [homeschool student progress](#) and [public school student progress](#) <sup>134</sup>, as the majority of those who use homeschool, use traditional methods. <sup>135</sup> In fact, John Taylor Gatto in a speech accepting his award as New York State Teacher of the Year says, "[Genuine reform is possible but it shouldn't cost anything](#)...", concluding that self-knowledge and building up the family unit (family as the central unit, not school as the central unit) were truly the main engines of education. <sup>136</sup>

Lots of Incest:

In closing this section, it is very easy to see by the flowchart that, although we are led to believe RTT/CCS are state's up directives, there are very few participants involved in the process altogether. In fact, the process is nearly completely dominated by Marc Tucker, Marc Tucker's organizations and previous works, Bill Gates, National Governor's Association (NGA) and Council of Chief State School

Officers (CCSSO).

It is very much worth noting here that Achieve (an outgrowth of NCEE) wrote the Common Core State Standards, while PARCC and SMARTER also work with Achieve to develop the assessments, giving rise to the thought, "which came first, the chicken or the egg"? In fact, both Standards AND Assessments are found on the same webpage on the [Achieve website](#).

In an interesting twist, NCEE births America's Choice (A comprehensive, coherent, [research-based solution](#) for schools—[elementary](#), [K–8](#), [middle](#), and [high](#)—that improves the performance of all students), which is then able to provide all the tools necessary to 'turn around' low performing schools – for a price. In addition, [Pearson buys America's Choice from NCEE in 2010](#), providing a revenue stream to NCEE of 3.6 million dollars.<sup>137</sup> Now, curricula, tests and textbooks; all the tools needed to completely 'reform' the education system of an ENTIRE nation is available through the same basic entities (more on [this](#)<sup>138</sup> and even [more](#)<sup>139</sup>). If that's not bothersome, what exactly is?

GOLD: BOX #2; "Recruiting, Developing, Rewarding, Retaining Teachers and Principals"

With RTT came a great number of opportunities to receive federal funds for teacher issues. [ARRA](#)<sup>140</sup> not only provided RTT money to fulfill this directive, but IDEA, i3 and SIG funding opportunities. In addition, the [America Competes Act](#)<sup>141</sup> also provides money for training and recruiting STEM teachers.

As previously mentioned, America's Choice provides professional development and teacher coaching programs. Unfortunately, and as a reader might suspect at this point, their methods follow [Dewey's Constructivist model](#).<sup>142</sup> If these methods are used in classrooms across the nation to satisfy RTT, our nation will watch student 'outcomes' drop even further because it appears, just like with Math and Reading, traditional teaching methods work best.

Guido Schwerdt and Amelie C. Wuppermann report in "[Sage on the Stage, Is Lecturing Really All That Bad?](#)"<sup>143</sup>, "Contrary to contemporary pedagogical thinking, we find that students score higher on standardized tests in the subject in which their teachers spent more time on lecture-style presentations than in the subject in which the teacher devoted more time to problem-solving activities. For both math and science, a shift of 10 percentage points of time from problem solving to lecture-style presentations (e.g., increasing the share of time spent lecturing from 20 to 30 percent) is associated with an increase in student test scores of 1 percent of a standard deviation. Another way to state the same finding is that students learn less in the classes in which their teachers spend more time on in-class problem solving."

Much has been said about [tying teacher performance pay to standardized tests](#).<sup>144</sup> Many [disagree with the process](#).<sup>145</sup> Some feel the [merits outweigh the pitfalls](#),<sup>146</sup> yet one very interesting and well-done study indicates that, yet again, traditional methods of 'grading' teachers work the best. [Thomas J. Kane, et. al](#),<sup>147</sup> released a study in Education Next this year (2011) indicating that, "...evaluations based on well-executed classroom observations do identify effective teachers and teaching practices. Teachers' scores on the classroom observation components of Cincinnati's evaluation system reliably predict the achievement gains made by their students in both math and reading."

Teacher retention is also described in RTT. Interestingly, [Marie Gryphon says](#), "For example, because schools don't always hire the best applicants, across-the-board salary increases cannot improve teacher quality much, and may even worsen it. That's because higher salaries draw more weak as well as strong applicants into teaching--applicants the current hiring system can't adequately screen. Unless administrators have incentives to hire the best teachers available, it's pointless to give them a larger group to choose from."<sup>148</sup> She goes on to say that pay scales and steep rewards for seniority causes average teacher quality to decline because top performers often get frustrated and leave the field for areas that reward their excellence.

Lots of Room for Personal, Political Views:

As has been previously mentioned (or at least eluded to) teachers tend to be trained via the Columbia University method spawned by Dewey. A report, released in 2006 by the then-President of the Teachers College at Columbia University, found that [most teacher schools](#) have low admissions

requirements and graduation standards.<sup>149</sup>

Enter [Teach For America](#) (TFA), now funded in part through [AmeriCorps](#) by way of ARRA. Their Core Values indicate the desire for transformational change for children and the country,<sup>150</sup> a mission akin to Dewey's. In fact, [Sarah Durand writes](#)<sup>151</sup> that because of the way RTT is written, many school districts are adding AmeriCorps workers in order to be more competitive for federal dollars. TFA is NOT non-partisan and is funded in part by George Soros' Open Society Institute, The Progressive Policy Institute (PPI) and other openly progressive/liberal organizations. Sarah writes that while surfing the TeachFor.us website, she found teachers making comments such as, "Math objectives don't exactly match up with the super holistic super progressive educational activities I had wanted to sneak into my lesson plans." [New Teach for America recruits are coming to Tulsa soon.](#)<sup>152</sup>

Just recently a video became viral on the internet showing a teachers forum in New York in April of 2011 where teachers were talking about their 'craft'. The Washington Times online posted the video after which writer [Kerry Pickett said](#), "There is no mention whatsoever about improving students' reading or math skills. The pure intent is how to use the classroom as an indoctrination machine for socialist and Marxist ideas and hide it at the same time."<sup>153</sup> Thanks to [Vygotsky](#) (a Dewey contemporary), even unwittingly teachers are using Marxist theories today in preschools through "[creative play](#)" and hands-on self-directed activities like "centers"<sup>154</sup>.

[Examples](#)<sup>155</sup> [today](#)<sup>156</sup> are, sadly, [endless](#).<sup>157</sup> [My daughter's 3rd grade class celebrated Earth Day for nearly a week](#). During that time, 9 graded worksheets about various Earth Day topics came home.<sup>158</sup> Some of them were so evidently lop-sided in ideology that my husband and I finally made an appointment to discuss them with the teacher. On the appointed day, we showed the teacher the worksheets while making our case. She didn't seem to have a clue what the fuss was about. Though she explained she did not believe she was indoctrinating the students in "green" ideology, unwittingly or otherwise, she most certainly was.

Teachers may use Marxist educational techniques in their classrooms, but certainly not in taxpayer funded (public) schools here in America.

GREEN: BOX #4; "State Wide Longitudinal Data System, SLDS (aka; P12, P20, OKLDS)"

The amount of money flowing into this aspect of RTT really isn't much different than any of the other dimensions of the grant. However, note that the data collection part of the RTT figure encompasses nearly one half of the entire diagram. It seems at least prudent to realize then, that it is very hard to control people when you know only their most basic information such as address and name. It is very easy to control people when you not only take data from children and young adults enrolled in public education that include very personal pieces of information, but then share it with ANY organization you deem necessary in order to assist in that child's education.

One of the four principle tenets of RTT is the ability to 'track' students across years from pre-K to college. Ostensibly, this [will make schools accountable for drop outs](#)<sup>159</sup> and "boost high school expectations and assessments but also to tackle other roadblocks – such as weak use of data, inequitably distributed teachers, and chronically low-performing schools – that have impeded progress towards [college- and career-ready success](#)".<sup>160</sup>

Sounds good, yet there are real problems here as well; this time with loss of privacy and personal liberty. Concerns here could nearly be summed up by the following statement from the [Data Quality Campaign](#)<sup>161</sup> (managed by the same players already identified), "Many states and other organizations that support the Data Quality Campaign have reported that the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) has been interpreted and applied in a manner that has had a significant chilling effect on the willingness of states to develop robust state longitudinal data systems as a necessary foundation for standards-based reform. In particular, FERPA imposes limits on the disclosure of student records by the educational agencies and institutions that receive funds from the U.S. Department of Education."

CHILLING? Keeping data regarding under age children private is CHILLING and not just an

everyday part of practicing one's right as a parent to care for one's children and practice one's right to [personal liberty in a free country?](#)<sup>162</sup>

Yet with that statement, Secretary Duncan [proceeded to propose changes](#) to the already-diluted FERPA guidelines (last changed in 2008) to make getting student information much easier for state and federal governments, as well as researchers, local and national health and welfare agencies and presumably anyone else who wants it.<sup>163</sup> In fact, the Fordham Institute produced research in 2009 (after the last changes to FERPA) concluding without doubt, that the privacy of children was specifically at risk with the [establishment of a P20 database.](#)<sup>164</sup>

The most troubling of all is the manner in which public school parents will lose even any semblance of control over their children's private information should this system be implemented. Duncan's changes specifically cut parents out of the system – especially when [data is shared among researchers or other organizations](#) deemed necessary in the education of your child. During many points in the 'track', student data can be shared [WITHOUT PARENTAL PERMISSION.](#)<sup>165</sup> Data may even be collected from students in [PRIVATE SCHOOL.](#)<sup>166</sup>

A frequent and alarming method of collecting data in schools has become the 'student questionnaire'. A throwback to Piaget and all the constructive theorist pioneers, these can be given to students while at school and [ask questions about feelings, attitudes, sexual behaviors](#) and a host of other things – all, again – without parental consent.<sup>167</sup>

Probably most disturbing of all is the actual range of data sets possible for collection. Found on the website for the National Data Model (the blueprint for ALL the state's data collection), data sets include factors such as, [who owns your home, what is the student's blood type, gingival gum condition, migrant status, weight at birth...](#)<sup>168</sup> How is ANY of this information relevant to 2+2=4?

Oklahoma has been building 'The Wave', a statewide longitudinal database for many years. An SLDS grant was written by the OSDE in 2009 to streamline and add to this database. [Page e45](#) begins the schematic for the SLDS framework, building on The Wave to create the ultimate goal – the seamless data sharing network that is the P20 (pre-K-age20).<sup>169</sup> With the necessary legislation in place on the local level, efforts should steam ahead to pour Oklahoma student data into a P20 database soon. Hopefully, this fact sheet on [Privacy in Education: Guide for Parents and Adult-Age Students](#) from the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse will help until this initiative can be buried.

## Chapter Nine

### RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE (RTT-ELC) PROGRAM

Though not addressed by Figure 1, this issue must be addressed because it is simply another example of the Marxist ideal and another one of John Dewey's visions for public education – universal preschool. After all, Dewey simply didn't believe that the family was the best thing for the child – societal engagement and the society as a whole was the best thing for the child.

In Oklahoma, Early Ed proponents repackaged Dewey as an economic fix or a moral obligation. "Early Childhood Education is Economic Development" ([Kim Henry, Tulsa World](#)).<sup>170</sup> "Early Childhood Education...is both a profound moral obligation and the most effective way to reverse the cycle of poverty in America." ([George Kaiser, NewsOK.com](#)).<sup>171</sup> Same day, different Dewey's.

One problem; though [aberrations](#)<sup>172, 173</sup> appear in the general literature, the body of research evidence indicate that government run Early Childhood Education does NOT work to create school readiness. The largest study on the effects of Early Childhood Education was begun on Head Start in 1998, with results only reported this year (2011). Apparently, the opportunity to hook in states with the promise of millions for early childhood education, made the Obama administration a bit reluctant to have to show that Head Start was yet another government program that spends huge amounts of taxpayer dollars [without producing a shred of lasting effect.](#)<sup>174</sup>

Early Education in Oklahoma was shown by a [Georgetown University study in 2008](#)<sup>175</sup> to have enormously positive effects on all kids reading and math skills when entering kindergarten, however,

CATO was able to show that these gains were only short-term. In fact [CATO's analysis of Georgetown's data](#)<sup>176</sup> showed that Oklahoma's achievement scores on NAEP tests suggest that the state's universal preschool program is at best ineffective and at worst harmful to student achievement. [Another CATO study from 1999](#)<sup>177</sup> has similar findings and [a Heritage Foundation report from May of 2009](#)<sup>178</sup> (which also included Oklahoma), reports a few positive outcomes such as number and letter recognition upon entering Kindergarten but that overall NAEP test scores have dropped since the start of 'universal' preschool in Oklahoma.

In an article posted in response to an editorial on Early Childhood education as a necessity and moral obligation, ROPE suggests that taxpayers be cut free from the burden of Head Start and allow private enterprise to build programs that would [strengthen and reinforce the family unit](#).<sup>179</sup>

### **CLOSING**

In closing, it can be said that nothing having to do with multiple thousands of kids on a day in and day out basis could be easy – especially when the job is ultimately to create good, America-loving citizens as our Forefathers directed. It can also be said, without reservation, that it could certainly be many times easier today than it is.

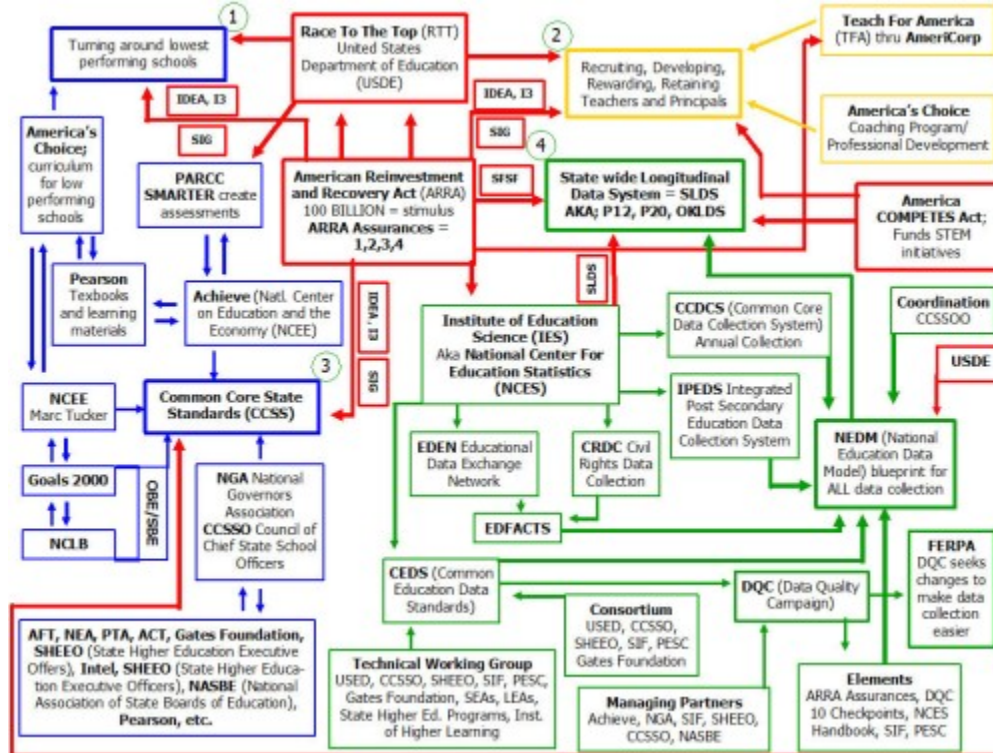
After reviewing the literature for indicators of educational progress, political trends and education research, the case for returning to historically traditional approaches for teaching and learning appears to produce better results than the progressive/constructivist/alternate, approach/s.

Simple machines are many times more reliable (and certainly more predictable) than complex machines. In turn, simple educational models would not only cost tax payers less money, but by and large, produce better results simply by virtue of their simplicity.

It IS time to REFORM education, but not as a re-package of every single failed educational program since the beginning of ESEA in 1965. Education in America should affirm the ideals of American Exceptionalism as ingrained in the Constitution by our American Forefathers and expound upon the traditional methods of education that created that ideal and spawned a nation of literate, entrepreneurs and the greatest nation in 5000 years.

John Taylor Gatto was on to something: simple is best. Nine times out of ten, that most simplistic form of education is traditional.

**Figure 1: Flow Chart linking all four areas of reform identified by the RTT grant.**



**Flowchart Key**

- PARCC: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
- NCLB: No Child Left Behind
- LEA: Local Education Agencies
- PESC: Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council
- SBE: Standards Based Education
- SIG: USDE School Improvement (grant) (39 Mi)
- i3: USDE Investing in Innovation (grant)
- IPEDS: Integrated Post Secondary Education Data System
- SMARTER: Assessment Consortium
- SEA: State Education Agencies
- SIF: Schools Interoperability Framework Association
- OBE: Outcomes Based Education
- SFSF: USDE State Fiscal Stabilization Funds
- ESEA: Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- IDEA: USDE Individuals with Disabilities Act (grant)
- SLDS: Statewide Longitudinal Data System

**Appendix 1: Identified Problems with Outcome-Based Education**

\*Student learning centers around social or life-related problems, issues and challenges based on current events and future trends – not historical knowledge or facts (Kjos Ministries, Looking back: An historical overview; <http://www.crossroad.to/Excerpts/chronologies/nea.htm>)

The American Founders intended that all children be taught the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic so they could go on to become well-informed citizens through their own diligent self study. (Skousen, W. Cleon, The 5000 Year Leap, National Center for Constitutional Studies, 2006, pp251-252)

This is a fundamental tenet of Marxist John Dewey's educational theory, "He therefore urged that manual training, science, nature-study, art and similar subjects be given precedence over reading,

writing and arithmetic (the traditional three R's) in the primary curriculum. The problems raised by the exercise of the child's motor powers in constructive work would lead naturally, he said, into learning the more abstract, intellectual branches of knowledge." (Warde, W. F. (George Novack), John Dewey's Theories of Education; 1960, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/novack/works/1960/x03.htm>)

\*Process skills (inquiry) take precedent over fact- and method-based "content" (KJOS Ministries)

Thomas Jefferson said, "The most effectual means of preventing the perversion of power into tyranny are to illuminate...the minds of the people at large, and more especially, to give them knowledge of those facts which history exhibits, that they may...know ambition under all its shapes, and...exert their natural powers to defeat its purposes." 1779 (Skousen)

...children would themselves carry on the educational process, aided and guided by the teacher. Third, they would be trained to behave cooperatively, sharing with and caring for one another. Then these creative, well-adjusted equalitarians would make over American society in their own image. (Ward, W.F.)

\*Outcomes are picked first, then curricula, instruction and teaching methodologies are aligned to move the child to the desired 'outcome' (Stuter, Lynn, M. ; What is Outcome-Based Education; 1996, [http://www.learn-usa.com/education\\_transformation/~education.htm](http://www.learn-usa.com/education_transformation/~education.htm))

It is in devising learner outcomes that one's world view comes into play. Those who see the world in terms of constant change, politically and morally, find a transformation model useful. They view human nature as evolving, changing rather than fixed. (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Outcome-based education; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outcome-based\\_education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outcome-based_education))

According to OBE guru Bill Spady, "the traditional subject-based curriculum disappears" from OBE. OBE report cards substitute check marks for grades focusing more on skills, attitudes and behaviors instead of knowledge and skills (Schlafly, Phyllis, Why the Public Schools are Being Federalized, 2000, <http://www.eagleforum.org/psr/2000/apr00/psrapr2000.html>)

\*All students of all groups will reach the same minimum standards – schools may not "give up" on unsuccessful students (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Outcome-based education; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outcome-based\\_education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outcome-based_education))

If the curriculum and instruction are not moving the children to mastery of the exit outcomes as measured by assessment, then the curriculum and instruction are changed. This process is repeated until the curriculum and instruction align with the exit outcomes and produce in the child the desired process. (Stuter, Lynn, M.; What is Outcome-Based Education; [http://www.learn-usa.com/education\\_transformation/~education.htm](http://www.learn-usa.com/education_transformation/~education.htm))

Because not all children learn at the same rate and in the same way, criterion referenced tests will be used that assess students against a low threshold of achievement (formerly associated with the letter grade of "D") so that "all children will learn" really means that all children will be taught only the low level of learning actually reached by all children. (Don Closson, Probe Ministries; Outcome Based Education; 1993, <http://www.leaderu.com/orgs/probe/docs/obe.html>)

\*Performance standards and grading rubrics are not based on traditional knowledge and skills but "higher order thinking skills" and "problem solving", and sometimes even attitudes (Psychology Wiki, Outcome-based education; [http://psychology.wikia.com/wiki/Outcome-based\\_education](http://psychology.wikia.com/wiki/Outcome-based_education))

In essence, OBE seeks to reject a rank-ordered definition of success by essentially promising that all students will perform as well as students on the high end of the bell curve, and no students will perform at the low end by setting one "standard" that all students will be required to meet. This assumption conflicts with the fact that even criterion-referenced tests produce a bell curve distribution with some students scoring higher than others. (Psychology Wiki, Outcome-based education; [http://psychology.wikia.com/wiki/Outcome-based\\_education](http://psychology.wikia.com/wiki/Outcome-based_education))

It is nearly impossible to process information logically and think critically without knowledge of basic facts upon which to build a framework for higher order thinking skills and problem solving.

\*OBE is wholly committed to the "whole language" word-guessing method rather than the phonics



methods (Schlafly, Phyllis, What's Wrong With Outcome Based Education?, 1993, <http://www.eagleforum.org/psr/1993/may93/psrmay93.html>)

Teachers are cautioned not to correct spelling and syntax errors because that could be damaging to the student's self-esteem and creativity (Schlafly, 1993)

"The Oklahoma Learner Outcomes dictate total subservience to the discredited "word-guessing" method of teaching reading to first graders and do not allow the use of the proven phonics method. (Schlafly, 1993) (HB1269 [2011] by Coody/Jolly mandates that all Oklahoma public schools must now teach phonics)

## **Appendix 2: Academic (Traditional) Education versus Transformational (Progressive) Education**

### Academic (Traditional) Education

\*Necessary to transmit the knowledge and skills of the old generation (Republic/nation) to the new, and provide students with an environment to learn

\*Based on the recitation and memorization of facts from textbooks upon which become the basis for higher order learning and critical thinking skills

\*Student use gained knowledge to formulate reasoned conclusions; cultivates and disciplines the mind

\*Outcomes neither required, nor promised

\*It is not required that every student leave prepared for college, or that every student receive an education that prepares them for a job; apprenticeships common

\*Prepared all students for different life tracks by providing basis for earned knowledge in the vocational, academic, or arts fields

\*State-centered. Federal law prohibits the US Department of Education from directing, supervising or controlling curriculum, textbooks or other instructional materials

\*Simple cognitive tests compared the abilities of students with each other and mastery not required for passing

\*Teacher centered and directed

### Transformational (Progressive) Education

\*Believes that the purpose of education is to make radical changes in the nature of our people, government, basic institutions, all of society and our entire world.

\*Defines the purpose of education in terms of changing attitudes, values and worldview of learners.

\*Student-centered instruction with Hands-on activities Student-led discovery Group activities

\*Project-based instruction using any available resource including Internet, library and outside experts

\*Integrated, interdisciplinary subjects or theme-based units, such as reading a story about cooking a meal and calculating the cost of the food.

\*Significant attention to social development, including teamwork, interpersonal relationships, and self-awareness.

\*Students choose (or are steered towards) different kinds of classes according to their perceived abilities or career plans. Decisions made early in education may preclude changes later, as a student on a vo-tech track may not have completed necessary prerequisite classes to switch to a university-preparation program.

Quist, Allen; America's Schools, The Battleground for Freedom, 2005, EdWatch, pp144-145  
Wikipedia, Traditional Education; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional\\_education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_education)

## **Appendix 4: Academic Math versus Transformational Math**

[Traditional mathematics:](#)

\*Emphasis is on memorization of basic facts such as the multiplication table and mastering step-by-step arithmetic algorithms by studying examples and much practice.

\*One correct answer is sought, using one "standard" method.

\*Mathematics after elementary grades is tracked with different students covering different levels of material.

\*Mathematics is taught as its own discipline without emphasis on social, political or global issues. There may be some emphasis on practical applications in science and technology.

Transformational mathematics:

\*Curriculum de-emphasizes procedural knowledge drills in favor of technology (calculators, computers) and an emphasis on conceptual understanding.

\*Lessons may include more exploratory material supportive of conceptual understanding, rather than direct presentation of facts and methods.

\*Emphasis may be on practical applications and greater issues such as the environment, gender and racial diversity, and social justice.

\*Mathematics lessons may include writing, drawing, games, and instruction with manipulatives rather than filling out worksheets.

\*Lessons may include exploration of concepts allowing students to invent their own procedures before teaching standard algorithms.

\*Grading may be based on demonstration of conceptual understanding rather than entirely on whether the final answer is correct.

\*In some countries (e.g. the United States), there may be expectations of high achievement and mastering algebra for all students rather than tracking some students into business math and others into mathematics for math and science careers.

Quist, Allen; America's Schools, The Battleground for Freedom, 2005, EdWatch, p151

Wikipedia, Traditional Education; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional\\_education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditional_education)

### **Appendix 5: Academic Reading versus Transformational Reading**

Academic Reading (Phonics):

\*The focus is on explicit training in sound to letter correspondence rules and the mechanics of decoding individual words.

\*Students initially focus on phonics subskills and reading simplified decodable texts. When they have mastered a sufficient number of rules, they are allowed to read freely and extensively. (Wikipedia)

\*Believes in teaching correct spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.

\*Teaches the principles of sentence and paragraph composition and composition generally.

\*Recognizes that while many of the structures of language are constructs, there are also universal principles of language and communications that need to be taught and applied to writing and speaking.

\*Sets high standards for accuracy on performance of mechanical skills. (Quist)

Transformational Reading (Whole Language):

\*Learning to read is assumed to be as natural as learning to speak, so students are not formally taught sound to letter correspondences, but assumed to infer them on their own. (Wikipedia)

\*Downplays the teaching of spelling, punctuation, grammar and paragraph structure.

\*Promotes "creative spelling" and "creative grammar" instead.

\*Focuses on the supposed creativity of the child instead of teaching correct mechanics.

\*Norms of mechanics are viewed as cultural constructs and are seen as being of little importance and even as an impediment to creativity.

\*Because of the time dedicated to teaching the themes of the Federal Curriculum, relatively little time is available for teaching the mechanics of language. (Quist)

Schlafly, Phyllis, What's Wrong With Outcome Based Education?, 1993,

<http://www.eagleforum.org/psr/1993/may93/psrmay93.html>

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### **Appendix 6: Interesting Contrasts in Education Theory**

Karl Marx and Thomas Jefferson

Educational Theory of Karl Marx

\*A change of social circumstances was required to establish a proper system of education, on the other hand a proper system of education was required to bring about a change of social circumstances

\*Combines education with industrial production

\*Constructivist in nature where meaning is "constructed" by the subject out of material provided by the external world, rather than "discovered".

\*Emphasizes the social-historical and collaborative character of human activity.

\*They [The Communists] seek to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.

Educational Theory of Thomas Jefferson

\*Knowledge obtained by study of classical literature, languages and history of past societies and empires throughout life

\*Literacy most important for citizenship and successful self-government

\*True knowledge obtained by seeing, listening and reading

\*"All men are created equal" and all children should be educated to instill the traits of self-discipline, self-governance and self-efficacy

\*Fact-based knowledge from books rather than actual experiences were more important in obtaining knowledge

New Foundations. The Educational Theory of Karl Marx;

<http://www.newfoundations.com/GALLERY/Marx.html>

New Foundations. The Educational Theory of Thomas Jefferson; <http://www.newfoundations.com/GALLERY/Jefferson.html>

### **Appendix 7: Interesting Contrasts in Education Theory**

John Dewey and Ben Franklin

Educational Theory of John Dewey

\*I believe that the only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself. Through these demands he is stimulated to act as a member of a unity, to emerge from his original narrowness of action and feeling and to conceive of himself from the standpoint of the welfare of the group to which he belongs.

\*Save as the efforts of the educator connect with some activity which the child is carrying on his own initiative independent of the educator, education becomes reduced to a pressure from without.

\*I believe that knowledge of social conditions, or the present state of civilization, is necessary in order properly to interpret the child's powers. The child has his own instincts and tendencies, but we do not know what these mean until we can translate them into their social equivalents.

\*Dewey's entire chapter on "The Aims of History in Elementary Education" recommends nothing less than a Marxist history for the new curriculum. If history was to become "dynamic" and "moving," its "economic and industrial aspects" had to be emphasized. This alone could prevent the tendency to "swamp history in myth, fairy story and merely literary renderings" of the bourgeois culture he sought to usher out.

Educational Theory of Ben Franklin

\*Learning is done everywhere and taught by those available; tutors, clergy, parents, student

\*Knowledge from experience just as important as book knowledge

\*Country becomes strong when individuals are bettered through education

\*Students should be free to explore whatever career path they chose

\*Success should come through determination and hard work

\*"General virtue is more probably to be expected and obtained from the education of youth, than from the exhortations of adult persons; bad habits and vices of the mind being, like diseases of the body, more easily prevented [in youth] than cured [in adults]"

New Foundations. The Educational Theory of John Dewey;

<http://www.newfoundations.com/GALLERY/Dewey.html>

New Foundations. The Educational Theory of Ben Franklin;

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### **Appendix 8: Thoughts on Public Education and the Republic**

"The roots of the present situation lie in the political history of the 1960's and its aftermath. The cultural upheavals of that era saw the accession to academic tenure of a generation of activists who regarded the university as a platform from which to advance their political mission. Drawing on the works of European Marxists such as Antonio Gramsci and Herbert Marcuse, and the educational theorist Paul Freire, the radicals viewed universities as "means of cultural production" analogous to the "means of production" in Marx's revolutionary scheme. To those professorial activists, the academic classroom offered a potential fulcrum for revolutionary change. Because the university trained journalists and editors, lawyers and judges, future political candidates and operatives, it provided a path to cultural "hegemony" and an opportunity to promote a radical transformation of the society at large." Former Communist, David Horowitz (and Jacob Laksin), *One-Party Classroom, How Radical Professors at America's Top Colleges Indoctrinate Students and Undermine Our Democracy*, Crown Forum, NY, 2009, pp6-7

"For decades, authors such as Howard Zinn, whose textbook, *A People's History of the United States*, has sold a million copies, have told students "the Cold War was our fault as much as Russia's, American soldiers fought in Korea to prop up a corrupt dictator, and Vietnam was not a blunder but a crime". Although books such as *Coral Ridge Ministries' Ten Truths About America's Christian Heritage* clearly show the Christian roots and unique founding of our nation, a dark view of America's past dominates the media and government-run public school classrooms." *The War on Children, How Pop Culture and Public Schools Put Our Kids at Risk*, Karen L. Gushta, Ph.D., Coral Ridge Ministries Media, Inc., 2009

"The [American] counter-regime tells us that there is no objective moral order, no universal principles, that principles or, as they prefer, "values" are "situated" or relative, that they depend upon one's circumstances, history, race, religion, ethnicity and class. While the American regime insists that good government must be based on a realistic view of human nature, the counter-regime believes that "human nature" is socially constructed and can be altered through deliberate social change and thus the utopian transformation of human society is possible. The American regime affirms *e pluribus unum*, the American union and the idea of one people. The counter-regime affirms "diversity", "multiculturalism" and "transnationalism". It emphasizes racial, gender and ethnic group consciousness, decries "systemic injustice" and deliberately employs the term the American "peoples" rather than the American people. Civic education is thus a battleground between those who believe that the purpose of citizenship education is to preserve, improve and transmit the American regime and those who believe that the purpose of civic education is, in the words of one of America's leading educators, "to transform the United States from what it is, to what it can and should be." Bradley C.S. Watson, *Civic Education and Culture*, ISI Books, 2005, p96-97

"Assimilationists (as proponents of the melting pot theory are called), on the other hand, assert that multiculturalism will destroy the fabric of the American society through ethnic divisions much as we are seeing in Europe today. Supporters of the melting pot argue that multicultural policies such as bilingual education actually keep immigrants and their children at a disadvantage, unable to live the American dream that drew them to our shores in the first place. It's not surprising, then, that immigrant

parents are often the most opposed to bilingual education, as a survey conducted by Public Agenda showed. Like most parents, they think it is important for children to learn to speak and read English." Myrna Blyth and Chriss Winston, "How to Raise an American; 1776 Fun and Easy Tools, Tips, and Activities to Help Your Child Love This Country." Crown Forum, NY, 2007

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