

Senate Education Committee

Kat Bourque 271-3093

SB 44, prohibiting the state from requiring implementation of common core standards.

Hearing Date: January 24, 2017

Time Opened: 10:39 a.m.

Time Closed: 11:07 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Reagan, Ward, Watters and Kahn

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Giuda

Bill Analysis : This bill prohibits the department of education and the state board of education from requiring the implementation of the common core standards in any school or school district in this state.

Sponsors :

Sen. Avard

Sen. Reagan

Sen. Birdsell

Sen. Daniels

Sen. Carson

Sen. Bradley

Sen. French

Sen. Innis

Rep. Ladd

Rep. Murotake

Rep. Cordelli

Who supports the bill: Senator, Senator Birdsell, Senator Daniels, Senator Reagan, Senator Carson, Senator French, Senator Innis, Ann Marie Banfield (Cornerstone), Erika Adler, Jocelyne Adler, Representative Seidel

Who opposes the bill: Carl Ladd (New Hampshire School Administrators Association)

Who is neutral on the bill: No one

Summary of testimony presented in support :

Senator Avard

Prime Sponsor

- This bill prohibits the Board of Education from requiring the implementation of Common Core standards at any schools or school districts within the state.
- This bill passed the House and Senate during the last session.
- Senator Watters asked Senator Avard to show him in RSA 193 where Common Core standards are noted. Senator Avard stated he could not because it is not there.
- Senator Watters asked if it would be fair to say that this legislation would have no effect. Senator Avard explained that some of his constituents have complained that their superintendent said that Common Core is mandated by the state. This legislation will codify the fact that Common Core cannot be mandated in the spirit of local control.
- This bill puts into statute that the school district can do as it wishes for curriculum, but that it can't be mandated by the state. If you do not want to use Common Core, the

school district will have that right. They will also have the right to use Common Core standards. It will be left up to the school district.

- This is the exact same bill that passed the House and Senate last year but was vetoed by the Governor.

Ann Marie Banfield

Cornerstone Policy Research

- Cornerstone is in support of the bill.
- Ms. Banfield questioned if RSA 193 that is referenced should be RSA 193:c.
- There have been attempts in the law to remove Common Core from the state.
- This bill should include all national standards, including Next Generation science standards, which are essentially Common Core standards for science.
- She has included links in her written testimony for further review.
- Ms. Banfield suggested that what is tested for accountability purposes is what should be taught.
- Standards are often rushed through with claims that are unsubstantiated.
- Legislators were not familiar with Common Core at time of implementation. Parents were also not notified and were unaware.
- Common Core is developmentally inappropriate for young children.
- Senator Watters referenced 193:c and asked Miss Banfield if she would you agree that Common Core is not specifically referenced there. She stated that this was correct.
- Senator Watters wondered if he was reading correctly from 193:e-2 where it says that the curriculum framework serves as a guide and does not establish a statewide curriculum. Therefore since Common Core does not occur in 193:c or e, this legislation would be ineffective. Ms. Banfield spoke of a current House bill that would force Common Core. This bill would counter that.
- Senator Watters stated that the legislature has to legislate based on what is in the statute and nothing more.
- Ms. Banfield wondered if we would want Common Core referenced specifically since there are so many national programs. It might want to read “national standards” as a whole.
- Senator Watters again stated that if the bill doesn’t address anything in the statute it is ineffective.
- Senator Watters wondered if changing curriculum in school districts will be difficult and add costs to those districts.

Erika Adler

- Erika is in 6th grade in Bedford.
- Erika is struggling with issues at school where different classes are testing out different programs, most of which are based on Common Core.
- No student can take a book home to read for homework because the school is short on books. The online program where they have to read tracks how fast and slow each student reads. She does not like that it tracks how quickly or slowly it takes her to complete a task.
- Her Mom had to ask Erika’s teacher for a book to take home as an alternative.
- Very few students like to read online and do not like being tracked.
- For students who have learning issues, it is unfortunate that students have to be

tracked.

- Erika stated that just because there are not enough books, it seems unfair that there is only an online alternative.
- Erika can't focus and concentrate on her home computer because it is in a family space.
- With a book, she can read anywhere, including her room, the bus, etc.
- This is not the only Common Core example where the program tracks students' learning.

Jocelyne Adler

- This meeting is coming at a timely point because of the situation that her daughter, Erika, just described.
- When she looked into this program, she discovered that these programs are being piloted within the school. She doesn't understand why, if the school is four books short, the students can't get their own or why the district can't order more.
- This program has the capability for students to be tracked while the program gets the information as the students are completing the activity.
- Ms. Adler believes that Common Core standards do exist because they are being used by the school.
- Ms. Adler questioned why Common Core has become the problem of legislators and why it has become a government problem to obtain standards through data gathering, while school boards also have to figure out these standards. She stated that it seems like we are selling out our kids to accommodate a Common Core or national concept.
- Senator Reagan asked if Ms. Adler received information ahead of time about the program being tested. Ms. Adler replied no, but that she was told it was in a principal's note. She went back to the note and it said that they were testing a reading program but it was not specific. If programs like this were going to be used, a consent aspect would be helpful.
- The assignment form sent home only referenced timing how long it took to read the assignment.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition : None

Neutral Information Presented: N/A

Future Action: Pending