

Op-Ed Argument

Fall 2013

Common Core

So, today my 16 year old son failed his second year of Algebra one, he passed the ISTEP as proficient in middle school and was expected to do great in high school math...so much for that. Indiana today is a wasteland of education, especially among minorities where receiving a high school diploma is a fifty-fifty chance and successfully completing college after receiving a diploma is only a reality for one in ten (Ray). The new standards, recommended for the state of Indiana, would officially put an end to the ISTEP and move to the common core. The common core will hold students to higher standards than ISTEP ever did, some worry that more students will struggle because of higher standards. However, higher standards are exactly what our students need. Take a look at Indiana's standardized test scores in comparison to that of other states and you will see that our current education system is failing.

In Indiana today more than 60 percent of jobs require some sort of post high school education. Due to our current education standards we are not providing enough students from our own education systems for those jobs. Our education system is failing on the lower echelon of Indiana incomes making high school graduation a distant goal for many students, let alone the hope of a college education. The Hoosier state is implementing many positive programs that reward schools and teachers of schools which are succeeding and seeing improved test scores however, these rewards do not provide for the struggling students.

Sadly though, the majority of schools which are seeing improved success in education are part of Indiana's middle and upper class, schools where most families don't have to worry about putting food on the table on a nightly basis. Parents and teachers alike need to help push the common core standards by supporting and implementing its new requirements, also support our

local commissioners who are expected to submit a recommendation for the common core to the Indiana Board of Education soon.

Not only do we need to push these new standards through but we also need to stop support of passing a student just to pass them. Too many students are being passed just to get them to the next level or because teachers feel bad for them because they work hard. Students should not be rewarded with advancement in course level until they are truly proficient in that subject and can produce passing/competitive test scores with students from Indiana and other states.

In Indiana 36 percent of adults have an associate's degree or higher, that means that most students produced by our education system are not up to the 21st century standards of the United States (Ray). This means that Hoosiers are less likely to be competitive in nationwide job searches reflecting poorly upon the state we live in. If nothing is done to change the education standards then we will continue to see Indiana slip into the depths of educational irrelevance. Letting that happen would not only mean the reputation of our kids as scholars would be hindered but also that their opportunities would be limited, regardless of how bright they truly might be; they would be discriminated against because they are from Indiana.

If education standards are not raised to a high level then Indiana will continue to struggle, support the new common core standards and support a bright future for your kids and every Hoosier generation to come. After all, do you want to be the proud parents of a fast food restaurant worker scraping by on minimum wage...or the parents of a neurological surgeon? Your choice, not mine.