

Kaye Ferry: National Common Core Standards

August 15, 2010

Well once again they drank the Kool-Aid and started the process of selling us down the river.

Last Monday, August 2, the Colorado Board of Education met to vote on whether or not it was in the best interest of the state of Colorado to adopt the **National Common Core Standards**. As I stated previously in another article, it is one of the stepping-stones needed to have your name put in the hat for possible allocation of federal funds but here are several problems as I see it.

By adopting these standards, that admittedly are no better than the standards already in place in our state (in fact, the Colorado standards were used as a model for this new legislation), we open ourselves up to federal government intervention how we run our school system.

Of course, the feds know how to get your attention, they dangle dollar signs in front of what has become a gullible public who are ill- informed and ever increasingly interested in submitting to big brother and his handouts.

But at what expense? If you do the math on a dollar figure that is shrinking as we speak, the maximum we could receive is \$50 a head for 4 years. That number was higher at one time but has suffered from budget cuts at the national level.

So I'll ask the question again, are the kids of Colorado on the auction block for such a pittance?

Apparently so, according to the State Board because they voted to adopt these standards in spite of over 600 letters/emails in opposition and 11 – yes 11 – in favor. And during the semi-pseudo-last minute attempt at input (give me a minute and I'll get back to that), 38 people spoke against and 4 spoke in favor. Pretty overwhelming response in opposition to this issue from where I sit.

But once again, government decided it knew best. Better than the people who put them in office, and better than the overwhelming negative written response. And better that the people who dragged themselves out of bed at an un-godly hour to protest. By the way, the vote was 3 Rs against and 3Ds and 1R for. The R for was Randy DeHoot from CD6 who is term limited as of Nov.

And probably the most shocking thing for me personally is that I was on the side of the unions. If my father were alive he would not understand how it was possible because- you got that right- the unions were also against this issue.

But before I forget, let's get back to the public input. Where to start? The feds' deadline for an answer as to which way we were going was 2:00pm on August 2. So one would have to wonder why we – the board - let such an important decision go down to the wire. The board's meeting was scheduled for 9:30 am on August 2 with no public discussion and a vote at 10:30.

Any of you who have known me before already know what I'm about to say; those of you who don't know me are about to learn; without a good process you cannot have a good outcome-period. And this process was totally unacceptable.

But if you were paying attention, you'll remember that I said that there was time for public comment. You bet, but only because one board member found it imperative to schedule a time to hear from the public. So with only 6 days' notice, the unofficial public hearing was slated for 7:30 that morning- this for a pivotal discussion on the future of Colorado Schools. People got up at 4:00am to drive from Pueblo and Grand Junction so they could have their "day in court." Is that really how a democracy is supposed to function? And yet 80 people came in the morning of the day that the vote was scheduled with the decision deadline looming. It defies all logic. And it short circuited the process.

I had a conversation with Mr. Polis about this issue. He assured me that he Federal government has no intention of trying to control our schools and asked him why he'd say that-they want to control everything else.

But there's always an upside. A new board can re-think this decision and if the complexion of the board changes, and a new vote is taken, perhaps sanity will prevail.

Kaye Ferry
Vail, Colorado