



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 18, 2014

## Pro-Common Core Deception Falling Apart

Facing a growing avalanche of grassroots opposition from teachers, parents, and voters across the political spectrum, pro-[Common Core](#) forces — Big Business, Big Media, the Obama administration, and more — are striking back at their critics, oftentimes with outright deception and utterly ridiculous claims. However, under even a modicum of scrutiny, the absurd allegations and unsubstantiated statements made by proponents of the Obama administration-funded nationalization of education standards promptly fall apart. It appears, then, that while Common Core supporters have the big bucks — much of it from U.S. taxpayers, most of the rest from Big Business and the Gates Foundation — advocates for local control and proper education have the truth on their side.



From the outset, the shadowy development and nationwide imposition of the widely criticized national K-12 standards have been shrouded in deception. The oft-parroted myth that Common Core was in any way “state-led,” for example, has been [thoroughly discredited by this publication](#) and many others, including by some of the nation’s top experts in the field. Claims that the nationalized standards would improve education have also been widely debunked, even by some of the respected educators who sat on the largely for-show “Common Core Validation Committee.” The content experts in both English and Mathematics [refused to sign off on the standards](#), citing poor quality, incorrect math, and more.

Meanwhile, Common Core financier and population-control fanatic Bill Gates inadvertently exposed the lie that the standards did not represent a takeover of the curriculum. “Last month, 46 Governors and Chief State School Officers made a public commitment to embrace these common standards,” Gates said during a speech at the 2009 National Conference of State Legislators. “This is encouraging — but identifying common standards is not enough. We’ll know we’ve succeeded when the curriculum and the tests are aligned to these standards.”

The notion that the federal government and the Obama administration were not involved in the whole scheme to centralize control over schools is so absurd that pro-Common Core zealots appear to have largely stopped making the claim. The national Common Core testing regime, for instance, is being financed by the federal government. The shadowy D.C.-based National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) also receive large sums of taxpayer cash, much of it through the federal government. Of course, as *The New American* has documented extensively, the Obama administration [used billions of taxpayer dollars to bribe and bludgeon states](#) into imposing Common Core, too.

Still, the deception by Common Core advocates continues unabated. One of the most incredible recent



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examples reviewed by *The New American* came from the “Higher State Standards Partnership,” a [front group for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable](#). The astroturf group paid to publish a propaganda advertisement in *The Daily Caller* headlined “How Common Core state standards prevent federal control of education.” The Big Business front-group’s ad, with a format designed to make it look like an actual article, never explained how the nationalized standards would prevent federal control of education. Instead, the ad made the preposterous claim that abandoning Common Core “would only bolster the hand of the Administration and invite federal control into our schools.”

While the Big Business front group has [been producing ads](#) purporting to show that “teachers” support the standards, [that lie](#) is easily put to rest by witnessing the [revolt among teachers in New York](#), where the Common Core roll-out has advanced faster than in other states. There, the board of the state teachers union voted unanimously against Common Core as it has been implemented so far. New York State Assemblyman Al Graf, a member of the Assembly Education Committee with a degree in education, even [told](#) *The New American* that the controversial standards represent “state-sponsored child abuse.” Even the governor in the establishment stronghold has been forced to retreat slightly on Common Core in the face of the public uprising. Opponents of the education takeover say this is just the start.

In Wisconsin, meanwhile, as *The New American* reported late last year, a handful of extremist Democrat politicians even [resorted to concocting fantastical conspiracy theories](#) about the overwhelming public outrage over the national standards. Among other claims, they suggested that some sort of vast right-wing conspiracy was afoot when five top authorities on the standards testified against them — even though many of the experts the lawmakers were attacking as part of the supposed conspiracy were in fact associated with the political Left. “Your manipulative, race/religion-baiting, sociopathic, misleading press release is a textbook example of what is wrong with American politics and is clearly a window into the mind of a warped individual who values the spotlight over serious discussions related to our nation’s children,” wrote Dr. Gary Thompson, a child psychologist who said he campaigned for Obama, after disgraced State Sen. John Lehman claimed the expert had been “fronting” for “right-wing extremism” in his testimony against Common Core.

More recently, the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* newspaper, widely regarded as having a strong bias in favor of Big Government and the Democrat Party, provided an excellent example of the deception when it launched a [half-baked attack on Dr. Duke Pesta](#) under the guise of doing a “profile.” The respected university professor and prominent Common Core critic has been traveling across America exposing the controversial national education standards to massive audiences. Already, he has spoken to tens of thousands of Wisconsin parents during his more than 150 talks, in addition to large groups all over the country. The piece, perhaps in an effort to seem “fair and balanced,” begins by noting that his students at the University of Wisconsin love him. However, the real agenda soon becomes transparent: attacking the popular professor for his powerful opposition to Common Core.

In addition to parroting the debunked talking points of Common Core proponents as if they were fact — a big faux pas in journalism — *Journal-Sentinel* reporter Karen Herzog cites alleged “critics” of Pesta’s efforts who supposedly “accuse him of making statements about the nationwide academic standards that are inflammatory, inaccurate or just plain absurd.” It turns out that those “critics,” in fact, at least the only one cited in the article, is one state education bureaucrat who makes blatantly false claims throughout the article — claims that the reporter allowed to pass unchallenged. Pesta said he was either not allowed a chance to respond, or the reporter simply ignored and omitted the vast amounts of



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documentation he provided that refuted the falsehoods.

Dr. Duke Pesta spent hours sending documents and information to the *Journal-Sentinel* reporter backing up the assertions he has made during his talks. Indeed, a copy of the documents with the reporter's questions and Dr. Pesta's responses obtained by *The New American* reveals meticulous use of official sources and news reports to support every statement that the newspaper brought into question. "Every single thing that this [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction] DPI hack challenges in the article, I went through meticulously and explained it to her," Dr. Pesta said in a recent radio interview with popular Wisconsin show host Vicki McKenna. "She didn't include one shred of that evidence."

Consider, as just one representative example of the deception and journalistic malpractice, the *Journal-Sentinel's* claim, attributed to unnamed "critics," that Pesta's warning about "a national sex education standard" in the pipeline is "inflammatory, inaccurate or just plain absurd." In fact, it is public knowledge that a wide assortment of outfits, including abortion giant Planned Parenthood, is pushing national sex-education standards. Dr. Pesta even provided a [link to the document](#) and a key excerpt from it: "The National Sexuality Education Standards were further informed by the work of the CDC's Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT); existing state and international education standards that include sexual health content; the Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education: Kindergarten - 12th Grade; and the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, recently adopted by most states.*" (Emphasis added).

The reporter was apparently not interested. "She never allowed me to make my case, she simply allowed the DPI guy to respond to little fragments of things that I might have said," Pesta continued, challenging DPI "Director of Education Information Services" John Johnson to a public debate. "If my comments are as absurd as you say they are, you should have no problem dealing with me in a public forum. What do you say, John? Quit hiding behind the DPI and the *Journal-Sentinel* and letting them do your hit work and lobbing you soft-balls, and you come out and talk to an actual person about this." The radio host, McKenna, agreed, saying she would like to see the alleged documentation and evidence behind the state education bureaucracy's claims. Neither the *Journal-Sentinel's* Herzog nor the DPI's Johnson responded to requests from *The New American* for comment and documentation by press time.

The reporter, however, did attend one of Pesta's three-hour presentations on Common Core in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, several days before her article was printed. More than 150 Wisconsin citizens, including four state legislators and two school board members, were in attendance. In detailed fashion, Pesta made his case against Common Core, citing and documenting his information throughout the talk. Incredibly, though, no mention of the hard-hitting talk appears in the article, and Herzog apparently failed to interview a single attendee. Throughout the article, Herzog cites supposed "critics" of Pesta's presentation, yet she never reveals the fact that, according to Pesta, none of those critics (or critic) ever attended one of his talks. Nor did she bother to solicit the opinions of people who actually heard Pesta speak in Cedarburg or elsewhere.

Still, the attack piece may, ironically, be an encouraging sign. "They would not be doing this if we were not making serious, serious inroads, if we weren't threatening them," Dr. Pesta said on the radio show, adding that in the day and a half since the article was published, he had received another dozen invitations to speak on the issue. "I prove everything I say, I proved it to that reporter.... This is how the *Journal-Sentinel* works."

Indeed, Pesta, who was not informed that the reporter was working with the DPI operative on the hit



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piece, was never even given an opportunity to respond to his debunked claims. The paper also took some of Pesta's remarks out of context and, incredibly — in a profile about Pesta — allowed the DPI operative to have the last word in the transparent hatchet job. “So much for a profile piece on me,” Pesta said, adding that the reporter misrepresented basic facts, even claiming to Pesta that her readers were not interested in Common Core and so it would not be the focus of the piece. The radio host agreed with Pesta, arguing that the journalist repeated brazen falsehoods, such as the claim that Common Core standards were “internationally bench-marked.”

Herzog also invents an alleged “conflict of interest,” citing unnamed supposed “critics,” by noting that Dr. Pesta “moonlights” as the academic director of [FreedomProject Education](#), an online K-12 school that prides itself on being free of Common Core influence. However, she fails to mention the real conflict of interest — that of her “critic,” the DPI's Johnson. The Obama administration [provided massive bribes to state education officials in exchange for imposing Common Core](#). Even worse, Obama and top administration officials repeatedly told government-school employees and officials that their stimulus-funded bribes to state governments were, as the president put it, “saving” the jobs of hundreds of thousands of teachers. Because the unconstitutional bribes were linked to accepting Common Core and [Orwellian new data-mining schemes](#), the administration essentially tried to buy the support of state and local education workers by claiming that their employment was at stake. Now *that* is a real conflict of interest — one that readers of the *Journal-Sentinel* deserved to know about.

The fact is that Common Core proponents must rely on taxpayer-funded bribes, deceptive propaganda funded by special-interests, and brazen deception to push the deeply controversial national standards. As the truth becomes more widely known, as it inevitably must, the radical effort to nationalize American education will almost certainly encounter even fiercer resistance. Already, numerous state governments across America, facing a mushrooming backlash from across the political spectrum, are working to extricate themselves from the scheme. However, as the deception unravels and the reality of the standards becomes clear, the tsunami of opposition to Common Core will continue to grow and accelerate.

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