

From: Baker, Josh <JoshBaker@gov.sc.gov>
To: Soura, Christian <ChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov>
Date: 4/3/2014 11:20:53 AM
Subject: Common Core

I tapped it out on a phone, so not perfect, but it gets to the point.

In direct response to what Jamie is saying, the Governor did not 'reauthorize' common core in 2011 or 2012 MOU with the Smarter Balanced Consortium. There was an existing MOU signed by Superintendent Rex and Governor Sanford that was the original acceptance of Race to the Top grant funds for test development, but South Carolina was an advisory state, not a governing state. What that administration gave us was the worst of both worlds - we were stuck with the standards, but also had no voting rights and therefore no input as a state as to how they would be implemented.

Her assertion that we reauthorized common core and the MOU we signed has a process for withdrawing from common core is false. When Sanford and Rex signed the MOU, they did commit the state to implementing common core as a condition of joining the test development consortia. However, withdrawing from the consortia does NOT reverse the state's decision to adopt common core standards, it only withdraws you from the test development consortia. Should the state adopt another assessment, such as one produced by ACT as has been discussed in recent months, this would be a good reason to withdraw from the consortia but would not change South Carolina's overall implementation of Common Core standards.

What Governor Haley did do was, at the request of Superintendent Zais who also ardently opposes Common Core, allow South Carolina to have a vote on the development of a test South Carolina's children may be stuck taking. This did not reauthorize our participation in the consortia - in the absence of her signature, the original MOU would govern South Carolina's participation - and it did not bind South Carolina to the SmarterBalanced test as our official assessment. All it did was give South Carolina some input into a process that this administration inherited.

As it was when we took office, the Education Oversight Committee and the State Board of Education will determine academic standards and the assessments used to measure them. The only way to bypass that process is legislatively.

Not as important, but the ONLY suggestion Jamie wrote was that we should use the Executive Budget to fight common core. Her suggestion is that we make a proposal that the General Assembly must deliver on - something that we have already done

Joshua D. Baker
Budget Director
Office of Governor Nikki R. Haley
803.734.5153 (o) 803.351.0981 (c)
joshbaker@gov.sc.gov