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Educator: States led into Common Core deception

BY LINDA MURPHY

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Time and again state leaders say Common Core is “state led.” The mantra “state led” has been repeated from federal officials, the National Governors Association, Council of Chief State School Officers and other supporters.

Fact is, they've been sold a bill of goods for bait. The inspiring images that have been painted of more rigorous standards, “higher-order thinking skills” and highly educated “career and college ready” students are a mirage, luring state officials to stay the course as opposition from informed citizens intensifies.

Big government, big business and education progressives have prideful delusions that their creation will be the best ever. The builders “buy in” to get a part in the reform process. Some have tremendous financial investments, such as Bill Gates' tab of more than \$5 billion. Jeb Bush's Foundation for Excellence in Education got a Gates grant and is a major Common Core supporter, which influences state leaders and their policy. Also on board is the PTA, another Gates beneficiary. This is the tip of the iceberg but you see how it works. Then there's the education industry that makes millions on tests and curriculum.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and its multinational corporate members bought in to guarantee workers “edu-trained” to their specifications. The Carnegie Foundation-funded National Center for Education and the Economy first produced these goals. NCEE's Director Marc Tucker, board member Hillary Clinton and Ira Magaziner developed detailed plans nationalizing education and the economy to control the nation's “human resources” — our children.

Five states refused to sign up for President Obama's “Race to the Top.” Others competed in an ingenious carrot and the stick or money-bait followed by compliance-control “competition.” The federal Department of Education dangled millions while states were required to pass Common Core laws. Losers only got the stick, including Oklahoma.

Federal money was used to entrap state education systems through grants given to two national assessment consortia run by top state school officials through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. Oklahoma schools Superintendent Janet Barresi is on the PARCC board.

A major shift in the federal role was revealed this spring when this was announced: “The U.S. Department of Education has created a technical-review process for the assessments for common standards. The technical review will focus on two aspects of the work the assessment consortia are doing: item design and validation.” Everyone knows the tests drive what will be taught.

Common Core implementation results in:

Losing state and local control.

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Extensively and frequently testing students.

Collecting extensive personal student data stored in data banks without parental consent.

Dropping superior state academic standards.

Adopting inferior untested national standards.

Committing states to multimillion dollar additional expenses.

Americans have been distressed by the federal government's growing control over banking, manufacturing and health care but most are unaware of the federal/corporate takeover of education.

Murphy is a former Republican candidate for state schools superintendent and a veteran educator.