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Social Foundations
Reflection 2

The Common Core State Standards is a topic that is taking over many conversations of not only educators and school professionals, but general societal conversations as well. It is something that has caused many intense interactions with people all around and seems to be causing uproar to many teachers in our nation. Being a young student just out of college, I did not get to experience the Common Core Standards myself as a student. I am also not a full time teacher yet so I haven't experienced teaching them in the classroom either. The only experience I have with them is what I get from substitute teaching at the middle and high school level, and what I hear from the teachers in the community I work in. With that being said, I have done much research on CCSS to try to inform myself of them. I have watched videos, read articles and listened to conferences all which talked about the pros and cons of CCSS and about how they are affecting our students.

Today, many people are against the CCSS for different reasons, and most of those against them are teachers. They do not approve of how they are being held accountable for a curriculum that has been imposed by the federal government whom has not thoroughly tested to see how they work in real classrooms (Ravitch, 2012). The CCSS were driven by policymakers and many believe it was done so with an insufficient public dialogue from experienced educators or programs (Strauss, 2012). The CCSS are telling teachers exactly how they should be teaching using a "fundamentally flawed" effort which has been foisted upon the nation (Ravitch, 2012). Along with the idea that teachers are being forced to teach their students a particular way, they are also being forced to be labeled as effective or ineffective teachers based on scores of tests their students have no possible way to be ready for. The bars have been raised so high that it is

having a disparate impact on all students, especially ELL students, students with disabilities, and students who are poor and low-performing (Ravitch, 2012). Many students are not succeeding, but rather failing due to the high standards, which is discouraging them to want to learn.

I know that the CCSS are being implemented because officials who are implementing them truly believe it will better our students in the long run. Ken Slentz (2012) held a conference justifying the CCSS in which he gave detailed reasoning behind the standards and helped people to understand what is so special about them and why we are being forced to implement them so quickly. For many teachers against the CCSS, this would be great video to watch because it gives you a look at the positives of the CCSS and allows you to see that benefits it will bring to our students. Slentz explains to the conference audience that the real intended purpose of the CCSS is to provide our students with the tools necessary to succeed in today's global economy. Instead of mapping standards from kindergarten all the way to grade 12 like they have done in the past, through CCSS they are looking at professional communities and finding out what it is exactly our students are lacking when they enter the real world. They are taking these expectations and working backwards with them, figuring out what our kids need to know to succeed outside of the classroom and applying it to every grade level. CCSS are being implemented so quickly because the amount of students entering college who are not college ready keeps increasing and we need to try and catch up to them so our students can actually get meaningful certifications from college.

Through CCSS, we are providing every single student with the same resources they need to help them succeed after high school. What's great about the CCSS is that it has been adopted in the majority of our nation. Not only is almost every student on the same track, pretty much every teacher is as well. I substitute teach in Valley Central, however I tutor students from

Wallkill. The Algebra students in Valley Central are on the same exact lesson as the Algebra students in Wallkill. Same lesson, same process, same content.

It is through CCSS and APPR that we are providing our teachers with challenges that are not supposed to be discouraging us, but rather bettering us and what we do. Our teachers need to be held accountable. We need to be sure they are content knowledgeable to our students get the best possible education they deserve. We all enter the teaching profession for the same reason: to help students succeed. While we may have been doing that in the past even without the CCSS, it is time that we do more for our students than the bare minimum. We can't only work to help our students succeed in the classroom. We need to prepare them so when they walk out of our schools they are ready for whatever it is they might encounter. CCSS are intended to help us do this. They provide us with the opportunity to make sure our kids are ready to graduate with legitimate choices for what the current economy offers and demands of them (Slentz, K. 2012).

I personally believe that the CCSS, as with anything in life, have both negative aspects and positive aspects. It would be very difficult to find some topic of conversation that every single person in the nation agreed on. Although I think it is great that we are all challenging each other, we need to remember the major reason why we are concerning ourselves with the CCSS so much. Our students. The main idea behind the CCSS is something that if done the correct way will truly benefits these students we are concerned about.

Resources

Ravitch, D. (2012, February 26). [Web log message]. Retrieved from

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Slentz, K. (2012) Justification of the standards. *2012 Network team institute*. Lecture conducted from New York.

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