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## Common Core Math 'Experiment' in U.S. Schools

All American public schools except those in Alaska, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia have started teaching to nationalized Common Core (CC) math standards. (Minnesota adopted the English Common Core standards, but refused the math standards.)

The math standards are controversial. Many reject the idea of federal control of what has been a state and local responsibility. Concepts and methods of instruction include some that are experimental — new and untried — suggesting that perhaps some prior testing of the efficacy would have been prudent. Some experts claim the CC standards are inferior to the previous standards of many states, and rather than strengthening U.S. students' performance in comparison to international results, the new standards will cause our students' performance to decline.

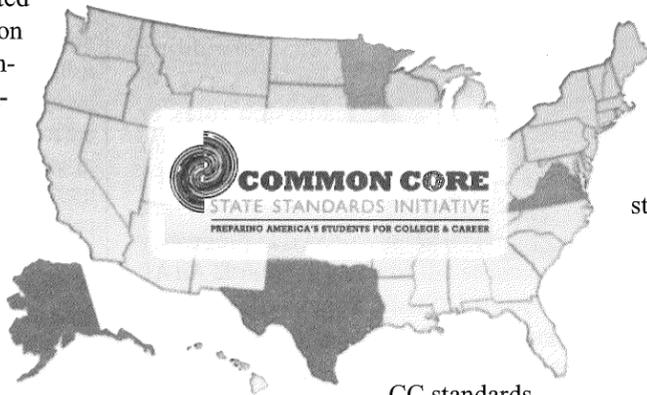
Ze'ev Wurman, an expert on mathematics standards and assessment and former U.S. Department of Education official, analyzed three separate studies of the Common Core math standards in the Summer 2012 issue of *Education Next*. The assessments were done by the Fordham Institute; by Andrew Porter, Dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education and colleagues; and by University of Southern California professor Morgan Polikoff.

Wurman says that the CC standards "may be higher than some state standards but they are certainly lower than the best of them." He notes that "Common Core defers fluency in division to grade 6," that the standards "tend to be wordy and hard to read," and that deferring Algebra to grade nine from grade eight countermands the goal of college readiness. Wurman continues:

Unfortunately, the main authors of the Common Core mathematics standards had minimal prior experience with writing standards, and it shows. While they may have had a long and distinguished list of advisers, they did not seem to have sufficient experience to select the wheat from the chaff. How, otherwise, can one explain their selecting an experimental approach to geometry, teaching it on the basis of rigid motions, that has not been successfully tried anywhere in the world? Simple prudence and an ounce of experience would tell them either to stick to what is known to work or to recommend a trial phase before foisting it sight-unseen on a nation of 300 million.

Professor R. James Milgram of Stanford, the only professional mathema-

ician on the Common Core Validation Committee, declined to sign off on the



CC standards.

He has since spoken against the standards in several states. He testified in Indiana:

The Common Core standards claim to be "benchmarked against international standards" but this phrase is meaningless. They are actually two or more

years behind international expectations by eighth grade, and only fall further behind as they talk about grades 8-12. Indeed, they don't even fully cover the material in a solid geometry course, or in the second year algebra course.

Dr. Milgram testified in Texas that the state has two choices:

1. [Common] Core Standards — in large measure a political document that, in spite of a number of real strengths, is written at a very low level and does not adequately reflect our current understanding of why the math programs in the high achieving countries give dramatically better results;

2. or the new Texas Standards that show every indication of being among

the best, if not the best, state standards in the country. They are written to prepare student[s] to both enter the workforce after graduation, and to take calculus in college if not earlier. They also reflect very well the approaches to mathematics education that underlie the results in the high achieving countries.

Texas rejected Common Core standards.

Addressing the creation of the CC math standards, W. Steven Wilson, a professor of mathematics at Johns Hopkins University, states, "no one got to write the standards. A committee wrote them." He continues, "There is much to criticize about them, and there are several sets of standards, including those in California,

(See *Common Core*, page 4)

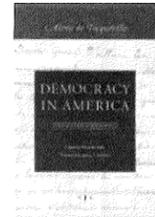
## Race, Class, and Gender Dominate American History

The state of Texas has required its public colleges to teach two semesters of American history to their students since 1971. According to a recent study of two universities, course offerings and the texts required for these courses were weighted heavily toward the subjects of Race, Class, and Gender (RCG), to the detriment of other topics. Most history professors were also found to have a strong interest in and to have done their Ph.D.s in RCG areas of study.

The National Association of Scholars (NAS) and the Texas Association of Scholars (TAS) examined courses at the University of Texas at Austin (UT) and Texas

A&M at College Station (A&M) that would fulfill the state's U.S. history requirement, as well as the texts assigned to undergraduate students who take these classes. This study found a definite emphasis on Race, Class, and Gender at both universities.

Study results are based on "all 85 sections of lower-division American history courses at UT and A&M for the Fall 2010 semester that satisfied the U.S. history requirement." They also analyzed the assigned readings for each course, as well as the research interests of the 46 professors teaching the courses.



The report says:

Teachers of American history should take race, class, and gender into account and should help students understand those aspects of our history, but those perspectives should not take precedence over all others.

The report goes on to say that students get a "less-than comprehensive picture of U.S. history" when "military, diplomatic, religious, [and] intellectual history" are not taught. The researchers specifically report that special topic courses "seem to exist mainly to allow faculty members to teach their special interests. In those courses and in more general courses, too, faculty members failed to assign many key documents from American history. . . ."

The lack of primary sources is also problematic. Only one professor assigned *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville, while none assigned the Mayflower Compact or Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address.

78% of UT faculty and 50% of A&M faculty created syllabi in which over half of course materials focused on race, class and gender issues.

78% of UT faculty and 64% of A&M faculty had special research interest in RCG. The NAS & TAS study found that of UT professors who received their doctorates in the '90s or later, 83% had RCG research interests, while 67% of their counterparts who received their Ph.D.s in the '70s or '80s had RCG research interests.

The numbers at A&M were more ex-

(See *American History*, page 4)

## Changing the Focus to College Graduation

More students than ever are attending college, but too many are starting college and never graduating with a degree. In 2011 President Obama asked for a study of "unsatisfactory and stagnating completion rates at colleges." This requested report was released in January 2013 and titled: "An Open Letter to College and University Leaders: College Completion Must Be Our Priority." Some aspects of this letter may sound an alarm among parents, students, and taxpayers.

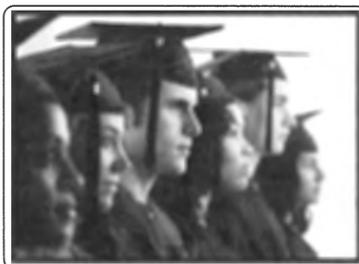
The National Commission on Higher Education Attainment (NCHEA), a group of leaders of U.S. community colleges and private and public colleges and universities, in the Open Letter suggests that "every institution must pay as much attention to the number of degrees it grants

— completion — as it does to success in administration and recruitment." NCHEA suggests that universities make a college official responsible for overseeing graduation rates. That indicates this is not already being done, and apparently it is not.

E. Gordon Gee, president of Ohio State University and NCHEA chair, said, "We concentrate most on the admissions side of things, getting the bodies in, and there's no one in charge of seeing that they get through and graduate. I'm going to call this person the completion dean." (*New York Times*, 01-24-2013)

According to the NCHEA, at public, four-year institutions the graduation rate is 54%. The rate increases to 63% when students who transfer out and eventually graduate from another institution are in-

(See *College Graduation*, page 3)



## EDUCATION BRIEFS

**Use of the Plan B morning-after pill is even more prevalent than originally admitted by New York City school officials.** Under a Freedom of Information Law request, the *New York Post* acquired documentation showing that instead of 567 girls receiving doses as previously admitted, “40 separate ‘school-based health centers’ doled out 12,721 doses of Plan B in 2011-12.” (02-04-13)

**The University of Arizona has added a minor in hip-hop music to university offerings.** The minor is not offered in the music department, but instead in the department of Africana Studies. “The curriculum goes beyond the stereotypical gang and drug cultures to examine the movement’s intersection with politics, marketing, fashion and other academic disciplines,” according to the *Los Angeles Times* (01-13-13). Many other universities offer hip-hop and rap music courses.

**A five-year-old in Pennsylvania and a six-year-old in Maryland were suspended from public schools in separate zero-tolerance “gun” incidents.** The little girl in Mt. Carmel, PA told a playmate she would shoot her with a pink play gun that makes bubbles while waiting for a school bus. The AP reports that the school district labeled her as a “terrorist threat.” The little boy in Silver Springs, MD pointed his finger like a gun and said “pow,” according to the *Washington Post*. School officials explained the suspension by claiming the boy “threatened to shoot” another student.

**Pediatricians issued a policy statement in the journal *Pediatrics* calling on schools to retain recess as a crucial part of students’ daily schedule.** They maintain that an increased focus on academic achievement should not put children at risk to miss the regular breaks from academics offered by recess. “Several studies demonstrated that recess, whether performed indoors or outdoors, made children more attentive and more productive in the classroom,” according to the medical doctors.

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## Pregnancies at School

Each year in the United States about 400,000 girls between age 15 and 19 give birth, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This is a rate of 34 per 1,000. As they experience pregnancy and parenthood, these girls often struggle to finish high school. Only half of teenage mothers earn their high school diploma or GED, compared with 89% of women who don’t have a child during their teenage years, according to a National Women’s Law center Title IX fact sheet. High



rates of teenage pregnancy, budget deficits, the need for Title IX compliance, and the desire to assist pregnant and parenting students present lawmakers and citizens with a dilemma.

Title IX, the 1972 civil rights law that is usually associated with ensuring equality for all students when playing sports, addresses other aspects of educational equality, including the rights of pregnant students. Advocates of pregnant and parenting students’ rights argue that school districts often do not comply with Title IX regulations for these students. Under Title IX, schools must allow pregnant and parenting students to continue in mainstream educational programs, and any

optional separate programs must be on a par with the conventional opportunities offered to other students. Districts must also grant the same exceptions and accommodations to pregnant students as are offered to other students with temporary disabilities, such as the opportunity to make up missed work.

Some schools penalize or even kick out students who become pregnant, often forbidding them to serve in leadership roles or punishing them for “unexcused” absences that are related to pregnancy and childbirth. An AP story titled “Study: Pregnant Teens Need Better School Support” cites that, “In almost half of the states . . . the definition of excused absences is not broad enough to include pregnant and parenting students. That typically results in a patchwork of policies where some school districts don’t excuse absences even if the student is in the hospital giving birth.” (11-22-2012)

*Education Week* reported that, until 2011, “Michigan had a law banning pregnant students from getting the same at-home educational services as students who might be unable to attend school for any other medical condition. The National

(See *Pregnancies at School*, page 4)

### MALLARD FILLMORE / by Bruce Tinsley



## Charter School Reclaims Los Angeles Locke High School

Alain Leroy Locke, who taught at Howard University for 40 years, might be pleased by the transformation at the high school bearing his name. Locke High School near the Watts area of Los Angeles has changed from a place where gangs ruled the bathrooms and fires were set, to several smaller centers of learning that are encouraging students to have high expectations, to study hard, and to achieve their goals. The charter school’s stated goals to increase safety and graduate more students are being achieved.

Once a troubled traditional public school, Locke started its transition to become a charter school in 2007. According to the *The New Yorker* magazine, when the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) refused to allow Locke to be taken over by a charter, Green Dot “be-

came the first charter group in the country to seize a high school, in a hostile takeover.” (05-11-2009) Teachers signed an agreement forcing the district to let the school become a charter.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, before the transition to Green Dot, Locke High School employed two full-time workers just to paint over graffiti. And, in May of 2008, just before Green Dot took possession of the main campus, as many as 600 students rioted. In that incident, fights between rival groups of black and Latino students got out of hand, resulting in the dispatch of 50 school police officers and 60 Los Angeles police officers rushing to campus to restore order (05-10-2008).

Like all charter schools, Locke is publicly financed. It is independently oper-

(See *Charter School*, page 4)

## Book of the Month



**Common Core: A Trojan Horse for Education Reform**, by Orlean Koehle, Small Helm Press Associates, 2012, \$18.00

An untried and unvetted fad is being rolled out at all grade levels, in all public schools across the nation, except in Alaska, Texas, Nebraska, and Virginia. The control of mathematics and English language education has been wrested away from state and local school boards and replaced by federal control. Federal testing is scheduled to begin in 2014.

Orlean Koehle’s *Common Core* examines the events leading to this unprecedented action undertaken by President Obama and the executive branch. Although the “Common Core State Standard Initiative” sounds as if it was developed by states, Common Core (CC) is a “national program, written by a national team.”

There was no state or national debate, and no Congressional or state legislative approval was given before implementation of CC began. Forty-six state governors thought they were getting a “free lunch” when they volunteered their states as Common Core participants. The governors were enticed with the promise of federal funds for their states.

States are finding that the CC actually forces them to share a \$16 billion price tag split among CC states. An estimate by the California Dept. of Education says Common Core will cost that state \$800 million. A CA education research center says it will cost \$800 million just for new curriculum, with an additional \$785 million to be incurred for teacher and principal training.

Koehle says the CC attempts to erase inequality between suburban and city school districts with “a massive redistribution of suburban education spending to the cities.” Standards are also dumbed down to achieve equity in performance.

The CC standards violate the Constitution and the law in several ways, according to Koehle. The collection of personally identifiable information about students and teachers is an invasion of privacy, and is allowed only because the executive branch bypassed Congress to weaken federal privacy laws.

Indoctrination is easier to achieve with nationalized education. Parents can sometimes institute changes at a local level but once edicts come down from D.C. it will be difficult to make local voices heard. The author exposes credible links between CC and the United Nations Agenda 21 sustainability movement which is aimed at controlling the West economically and politically.

Koehle implores parents and other citizens to immediately contact their state school board, state education superintendent and governor, urging them to reverse the march toward nationalized education.

# FOCUS: Common Core Standards' Devastating Impact on Literary Study and Analytical Thinking

by Sandra Stotsky

Originally published by The Heritage Foundation, 12-11-2012

Since coming to office, the Obama Administration has been intent on standardizing what is taught at each grade level in all of the nation's schools. It has used its flagship "Race to the Top" competitive grant program to entice states to adopt the K-12 standards developed by a joint project of the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). It has also suggested, in its 2009 Blueprint for Education Reform, that adoption of these common standards could one day be a qualification for states wanting future Title 1 dollars for low-income schools.

Parents, teachers, and education leaders along the political spectrum are increasingly raising questions about the constitutionality and transparency of this joint project, called the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI). They are also expressing concern about the high cost of implementing the standards and the national tests that will be based on them, as well as the potential loss of local control of curriculum and instruction.

## Common Core: A Step Backwards for English Standards

Little attention has been paid to the academic quality of the mathematics, literature, and writing standards that NGA and CCSSO developed, despite the fact that they were not internationally benchmarked or research-based. The fatal flaw in the Common Core English Language Arts (ELA) standards went unnoticed because over 45 state boards of education and/or their governors hastily adopted the standards in 2010, in some cases long before they were written or finalized.

Most states agreeing to adopt the Common Core English Language Arts standards may well have thought they were strengthening high school English coursework. However, the architects of Common Core's ELA standards never claimed that their standards would do so. Rather, they claimed that these standards would make all students "college-ready."

This extravagant promise was and remains undergirded by a belief that a heavy dose of informational or nonfiction reading (50 percent of reading instructional time in the English class at every grade level) will result in greater college readiness than a concentrated study of complex literature in the secondary English class will.

## Loss of Classic Literature

Why do Common Core's architects believe that reading more nonfiction and "informational" texts in English classes

(and in other high school classes) will improve students' college readiness?

Their belief seems to be based on what they see as the logical implication of the fact that college students read more informational than literary texts. However, there is absolutely no empirical research to suggest that college readiness is promoted by informational or nonfiction reading in high school English classes (or in mathematics and science classes).

In fact, the history of the secondary English curriculum in 20th-century America suggests that the decline in readiness for college reading stems in large part from an increasingly incoherent, less challenging literature curriculum from the 1960s onward. This decline has been propelled by the fragmentation of the year-long English course into semester electives, the conversion of junior high schools into middle schools, and the assignment of easier, shorter, and contemporary texts — often in the name of multiculturalism.

From about the 1900s — the beginning of uniform college entrance requirements via the college boards — until the 1960s, a challenging, literature-heavy English curriculum was understood to be precisely what pre-college students needed. Nonetheless, undeterred by the lack of evidence to support their sales pitch, Common Core's architects divided all of the ELA reading standards into two groups: ten standards for informational reading and nine for literary reading at every grade level.

This misplaced stress on informational texts (no matter how much is literary nonfiction) reflects the limited expertise of Common Core's architects and sponsoring organizations in curriculum and in teachers' training. This division of reading standards was clearly not developed or approved by English teachers and humanities scholars, because it makes English teachers responsible for something they have not been trained to teach and will not be trained to teach unless the entire undergraduate English major and preparatory programs in English education are changed.

Common Core's damage to the English curriculum is already taking shape. Anecdotal reports from high school English teachers indicate that the amount of informational or nonfiction reading they are being told to do in their classroom is 50 percent or more of their reading instructional time — and that they will have time only for excerpts from novels, plays, or epic poems if they want students to read more than very short stories and poems.

## Long-Term Consequences

A diminished emphasis on literature

in the secondary grades makes it unlikely that American students will study a meaningful range of culturally and historically significant literary works before graduation. It also prevents students from acquiring a rich understanding and use of the English language. Perhaps of greatest concern, it may lead to a decreased capacity for analytical thinking.

Indeed, it is more than likely that college readiness will decrease when secondary English teachers begin to reduce the study of complex literary texts and literary traditions in order to prioritize informational or nonfiction texts. This is because, as ACT (a college entrance exam) found, complexity is laden with literary features: It involves characters, literary devices, tone, ambiguity, elaboration, structure, intricate language, and unclear intentions. By reducing literary study, Common Core decreases students' opportunity to develop the analytical thinking once developed in just an elite group by the vocabulary, structure, style, ambiguity, point of view, figurative language, and irony in classic literary texts.

It will be hard to find informational texts with similar textual challenges (whether or not literary nonfiction). A volume published in 2011 by the National

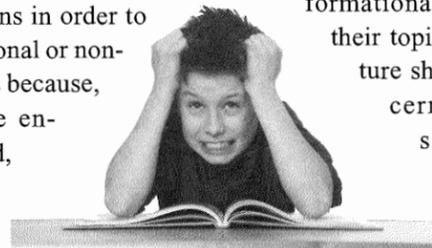
Council of Teachers of English on how English teachers might implement Common Core's standards helps us to understand why. Among other things, it offers as examples of informational or nonfiction texts selections on computer geeks, fast food, teenage marketing, and the working poor. This is hardly the kind of material to exhibit ambiguity, subtlety, and irony.

## Common Core Is Not the Answer

An English curriculum overloaded with advocacy journalism or with "informational" articles chosen for their topical and/or political nature should raise serious concerns among parents, school leaders, and policymakers.

Common Core's standards not only present a serious threat to state and local education authority, but also put academic quality at risk. Pushing fatally flawed education standards into America's schools is not the way to improve education for America's students.

*Sandra Stotsky, Professor of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas (retired as of 12-2012) was also Senior Associate Commissioner at the Massachusetts Department of Education and in charge of the development of the state's widely praised English Language Arts standards.*



## College Graduation (Continued from page 1)

cluded. At private, nonprofit four-year institutions, the comparable numbers are 63% and 73%.

Outstanding student college indebtedness in 2012 exceeded \$1 trillion. Student loan default rates are at an all-time high. Many of the students who never graduate from college still have loans to repay. The executive branch's 2010 streamlining of the college loan process leaves the federal government owed. Read that as *taxpayer*. 93% of 2011 student loans were made by the federal government.

(*Wall Street Journal*, 11-28-12)

The NCHCA Open Letter says, "efforts to improve retention and completion must not come at the expense of access. After all, the easiest way to boost graduation rates would be to accept only those students with high academic qualifications." Data compiled about students' remedial education needs in order to do college level work suggests many admitted students are not qualified. According to The Hechinger Report, "Nationwide, about 50 percent of

undergraduates and as many as 70 percent of those entering community colleges are in remedial courses." (01-28-13)

Other important NCHCA suggestions are: identifying and assisting students in academic jeopardy, support services for nontraditional students, such as veterans, and ensuring "that faculty have the appropriate pedagogical knowledge to communicate effectively with the students they teach."

Suggestions not made by the NCHCA, but also perhaps useful are: schools should admit fewer students,

focusing on those who are qualified to do college level work and prospective students should be given precise data about graduation rates from each college to which they apply. Full disclosure of the binding nature of student loans and their implications for students who drop out should be stressed. Additionally, once admitted, schools should be required to supply data on job prospects in a student's chosen field of study, so they know if they will be employable and able to pay off their loans.



**Common Core** *(Continued from page 1)*

the District of Columbia, Florida, Indiana, and Washington that are clearly better. Yet Common Core is vastly superior — not just a little bit better, but vastly superior — to the standards in more than 30 states.” (*Education Next*, Summer 2012)

Critics of Common Core wonder why, instead of relying on the “clearly better” standards in certain states, all states were pushed toward conformity to standards even a supporter like Wilson claims are barely better than average.

Wurman says in *Education Next*:

The Common Core mathematics standards fail on clarity and rigor compared to better state standards and to those of high-achieving countries. They do not expect algebra to be taught in grade 8 and instead defer it to high school, reversing the most significant change in mathematics education in America in the last decade, supported by the 2008 recommendations of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, and contrary to the practice of our international competitors. Moreover, their promise of college readiness rings hollow. Its college-readiness standards are below the admission requirement of most four-year state colleges.

Many are left wondering what will happen to students as a result of the Common Core experiment. Parents are woefully uninformed; many have no idea that the nationalized education program with federal testing to begin in 2014 has been introduced in their child’s school. Other parents are mounting campaigns to re-

verse state adoption. No attempts have been decisively successful so far. Hope for stopping the nationalization of education is in the hands of parents, educators and state governments.

Science and Social Studies Common Core Standards are currently being developed and will be adopted by some states.

This prediction by Wurman should give concerned citizens pause:

I believe the Common Core marks the cessation of educational standards improvement in the United States. No state has any reason left to aspire for first-rate standards, as all states will be judged by the same mediocre national benchmark enforced by the federal government.

Moreover, there are organizations that have reasons to work for lower and less-demanding standards, specifically teachers unions and professional teacher organizations. While they may not admit it, they have a vested interest in lowering the accountability bar for their members. With Common Core, they have a single target to aim for, rather than 50 distributed ones. So give it some time and, as sunset follows sunrise, we will see even those mediocre standards being made less demanding. This will be done in the name of “critical thinking” and “21st-century” skills, and in faraway Washington D.C., well beyond the reach of parents and most states and employers.

**Charter School** *(Continued from page 2)*

ated by Green Dot Charter Schools, which receives less money than the average LAUSD school, but more than some charter schools due to Locke’s designation as a low-achieving school. Additional monies have been donated by philanthropic funds and individuals; the per student expenditure is roughly one-quarter of the amount spent per student before the charter school takeover. (*Fast Magazine*, 05-13-2012)

Instead of the usual charter school student selection process, Locke’s geographic location determined who attended the new school. “Locke is a full test of the charter model because the agreement with Green Dot is [that] they will take all children in that attendance area,” said L.A. schools Supt. David L. Brewer. “We expect they’re going to have the same kids we have had there before.” (*Los Angeles Times*, 11-18-2008)

Green Dot split Locke into several smaller charter schools that run semi-autonomously, making decisions about personnel, curriculum, class size, budget allocation, and which teachers union stipulations to ignore. Although operating with unionized teachers, Green Dot can disregard large portions of the union contract, and the teachers are okay with that.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, when Green Dot took over Locke High

School, only 1 in 9 Locke students scored proficient or better in English on state tests, and in math the number was fewer than 1 in 25. (09-18-2008)

Green Dot is currently monitored by several entities, including a University of California, Los Angeles multi-year study being conducted on the Locke campus and which is funded by the Gates foundation. According to *Fast Company* magazine, the UCLA study has so far shown an improved graduation rate from Locke’s previous 55% to 80%, and improved college readiness from 13% to 48% (05-13-12). This study examined how Green Dot Locke (GDL) students performed on a range of outcomes across multiple years compared to groups of carefully matched control students attending demographically similar high schools in the LAUSD. The UCLA study states that it “found statistically significant, positive effects for the [GDL] transformation including improved achievement, school persistence, and completion of college preparatory courses.” The study was released in May of 2012.

Green Dot School runs 18 charter schools in California and was the only Los Angeles area finalist in the 2012 competition to receive “Race to the Top” grant money. Among Green Dot Public Schools’

**American History** *(Continued from page 1)*

treme: 90% of professors who received Ph.D.s in the ’90s or later had RCG research interests, compared to only 36% of those who received doctorates in the ’70s or ’80s.

The authors stress that although this study involved only two universities, the problems uncovered are by no means unique, but are prevalent, or indeed worse, on other college campuses.

The report offers ten recommendations to correct the shallow teaching of American history, including: review and repair gaps and over-emphases, even if this requires an external review; hire fac-

ulty with broader research interests; be certain survey and intro courses are broad, comprehensive reviews; and ensure that courses promote a complete curriculum.

The authors of the report also ask the seemingly impossible, suggesting that “graduate programs in U.S. history should ensure that they do not unduly privilege themes of race, class, and gender” and they also suggest a broad depoliticizing of history. Offering the American story “as a whole” could someday happen, but American college students may wait a long while for that big pendulum to swing.

**Pregnancies at School** *(Continued from page 2)*

Women’s Law Center in Washington worked on undoing that ban and one in Georgia in 2009.” (06-13-2012)

Many school districts that offer support to pregnant and parenting students have been forced to slash their programs due to budget restraints. One such program, the New Heights Teen Parent Program in Washington, D.C. offers about 600 students accountability, homework assistance, and help with childcare, housing, and parenting skills. But the AP reports, “the \$1.6 million federal grant funding the program runs out next year and officials said they don’t have a clear future funding source.”

Champions of such programs claim that they would save taxpayers money in the long run as they have reduced the rate of recurring pregnancies and the mothers’ dependence on welfare. Critics argue that the presence of such accommodations as daycare centers in high schools promotes the acceptance and prevalence of teen pregnancies. Such accommodations present a stark contrast to the days when pregnant students were treated as social pariahs and forced to drop out, which some argue used to serve as a deterrent to teenage pregnancies.

Pro-life advocates argue that supporting teenage mothers throughout their pregnancies, parenting, and education is a way to prevent abortions and save taxpayers money. Planned Parenthood’s (PP) annual report, released January 2013, announced that the organization’s affiliated clinics performed 333,964 abortions in fiscal year 2012 (which works out to one every 94 seconds). In fiscal 2012, PP received \$542.4 million in government health services grants and reimbursements, which includes payments from Medicaid managed-care plans. Taxpayers provide 45% of PP’s annual revenue. PP is not supposed to use federal money to support abortions, but taxpayers are clearly financially supporting PP.

A Congressional bill named the Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act would have authorized the

Secretary of Education to grant supplemental funding to school districts in order to provide academic support programs, and increased data collection and reporting regarding pregnant students. The bill stated that “Females who do not earn a high school diploma are especially likely to face severe economic consequences — to be unemployed, to earn very low wages, and to have to rely on public support programs — that significantly affect not only individual students and their families, but also our national economy as a whole.” The bill died in committee in 2012.

A *New York Times* article titled “Having a Life Before Creating One” describes a social program that has been a monumental success. Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club in the Bronx primarily serves children whose working parents need a place to take them after school. It offers seminars that cover such topics as which fork to use, who should pay for a date, and why a student shouldn’t give an abusive date another chance. “The classes at Kips Bay hardly avoid discussions of birth control, but they are steeped in larger conversations about civility, about learning how to treat people respectfully, about upending gender-role assumptions that 15-year-olds might have.” (12-15-12)

The article reports:

In the 10 years the classes have been offered at the facility... only one of the 500 girls who have participated has become a teenage mother. This figure, remarkable in itself, has added resonance in the Bronx, which has the highest teenage birthrate of any [New York City] borough, according to city statistics: 42 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19.

Perhaps this program reveals an answer to the dilemma school districts face in helping pregnant and parenting students: “Holistic approaches to helping teenagers navigate their love lives would seem to best position them for a productive adult experience.”

basic tenets are: small, safe, personalized schools, high expectations for all students, parent participation, maximized funding to the classroom, and local control with extensive professional development and accountability.

Quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* at

the time of the Locke High School transition, A.J. Duffy, then president of the United Teachers Union of Los Angeles said, “The task Green Dot’s taking on is monumental. The school district has shown for 20 years or more [that] they can’t do this job.”