

# opinion

## DEANS SAY KEEP COMMON CORE

*The following letter was signed by the education deans of Bowling Green State University, Central State University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, Miami University, Ohio University, Ohio State University, Shawnee State University, University of Akron, University of Cincinnati, University of Toledo, Wright State University and Youngstown State University.*

**T**he State University Education Deans oppose the effort to repeal the Common Core state standards in Ohio. In 2010 the Ohio State Board of Education adopted the Common Core, and since that time more than 40 states have followed suit. These standards are the result of the efforts of many individuals who are committed to the success of all children and all schools.

They are not the result of a federal mandate. The adoption of the Common Core state standards has been led by governors and state commissioners of education through the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers.

The Common Core State Standards are a set of college- and career-ready standards for kindergarten through grade 12. The new standards focus on application and critical thinking rather than the demonstration of the ability to memorize in order to pass the test. They are clearer, fewer, more in-depth and internationally benchmarked. Ohio educators, both K-12 and college faculty, took an active role in developing the standards and firmly believe Ohio legislators must stay the course and not undo the work that has been done.

There is statewide consensus that higher standards are needed to address the problem of college completion. Over 40 percent of high school graduates in Ohio are required to take remedial coursework because they are not ready for college-level, credit-bearing mathematics and English courses in college. Not only does this have financial consequences for stu-

dents and their families, data from the Ohio Board of Regents show that 32 percent of students taking remedial coursework do not make it to their sophomore year as compared with 16 percent of remediation-free students. Only 13 percent of students taking remedial coursework earn a bachelor's degree by the end of the six-year period, while 48 percent of nonremedial students earn a bachelor's degree in the same time.

For the past four years, K-12 teachers and higher education faculty have worked diligently to align curriculum and teaching to the Common Core. The Ohio Board of Regents formed committees of college mathematics

and English faculty to align its "Expectations for College and Career Readiness in English" (2011) and "Mathematical Expectations for College and Career Readiness" (2011) with the Common Core. In 2012, "Uniform Statewide Standards for Remediation-Free Status" was established by the Presidents of Ohio's Public Colleges and Universities. All of these are aligned with the Common Core.

As a result, universities across the Ohio have revised their freshmen level courses to be aligned with the Common Core. Teacher preparation programs across the state have done likewise. Student teachers are now prepared to enter the classroom with

a firm foundation in the Common Core and how to apply them to their teaching. K-12 teachers have been revising their curriculum and teaching to align with the new standards. Alignment has thus brought together teacher education faculty, faculty in English and mathematics and K-12 teachers. Students and their families now have an understanding of college academic expectations, an unambiguous pathway for admission to college and a clear opportunity for academic success once there.

As State University Education Deans we strongly support Ohio's learning standards and oppose H.B. 597. ■