

11 Sep 2015 State Board of Education Testimony

Hello. My name is Randy Houchins. I thank you for your time and for your attention.

In July I gave the Board two math problems to work using algebra tiles. Today, I give you more problems to work-- problems with pretty pictures of hearts, diamonds, smiley faces, explosions, crosses and lightning bolts to solve simple algebra. Why these ridiculous examples to work algebra problems in Texas? It is because we suffer Common Core/Reform Math in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as a result of "Process Standards."

After my testimony in July you asked TEA representative Monica Martinez about the "Process Standards." While what Ms. Martinez said is technically correct--indeed the process standards have been in the Code since 1998, her statement is unfortunately very misleading.

Let me explain how the inclusion of the "Process Standards" in 2012 resulted with Common Core in the TEKS:

In the 1998 edition of Chapter 111 Subchapter A (Elementary Math) the term "Process Standards" is not used at all. There is a list of "underlying processes and mathematical tools" listed at the end of each grade level and course for upper grades. The "processes and tools" are the same for K-3, then more are added for grades 4-5,

and more added for grades 6-8.

In the 2012 edition this list of “processes and tools” is moved from the end of TEKS for each grade level to the beginning and now defines them as “Process Standards.” The wording was updated to be nearly identical to Common Core. The 2012 revision lists the term “Process Standards” 82 times.

Let’s look at the example for 5th grade.

In the introduction to 5th grade math (Chapter 111.7) the following is stated:

(5) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.

The process standards then state:

(C) select tools, including real objects, manipulatives, paper and pencil, and technology as appropriate, and techniques, including mental math, estimation, and number sense as appropriate, to solve problems;

Then in every single “content standard” portion of the TEKS the following is stated:

The student applies mathematical process standards to...

This same pattern is repeated in every grade level. Because each “content standard” calls for the process standards to be used and the process standards call for methods “including” objects, manipulatives, paper and pencil, technology, using mental math, estimation, and number sense – all of this content **MUST** be mastered and tested. Welcome Common Core...

As I have demonstrated many times with examples (including the algebra tiles and ridiculous pictures from today) the instructional materials are starting to teach many methods. This is the pathway the reform math zealots used to corrupt the TEKS.

Reform Education has been around a very long time. In math you can read David Klein’s article, “A Brief History of American K-12 Mathematics Education in the 20th Century” to see how long this battle has been waged.

These reform math zealots have infiltrated the TEA and the organizations the TEA contracts with and TEA looks to for advice.

TEA has become a lawless organization. They have pushed Common Core into the TEKS, they violate parental rights, and they are **NOT** implementing the

requirements in HB743. We need the SBOE and other legislators to do what they are elected to do and correct these situations.

The TEA seems more interested in equal outcomes than whether kids are learning. Why is demographic information (male, female, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status) required for all the end-of-course tests and for STAAR? Why are students not allowed to test out of Algebra I this year?

Doesn't it make more sense to provide equal opportunity and let the outcomes vary based on the ability of the students?

Review the TEKS. Remove Common Core and this ridiculous content that Reform Education thinks brings conceptual understanding.

I again thank you for your time and attention. Any questions?