

# Operation Jericho

Standing in the gap for our nation's Christian children. A Project of Citizen's United for Responsible Education - C.U.R.E

## Common Core Science (or Science Standards for Suckers)

Karl Priest September 22, 2013

### POOR PERFORMANCE

It is clear that American “students don't know much about science.” That statement came from the prestigious journal *Science* published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).<sup>1</sup> That is not news! For many years the reports have been similar. In 1998 “U.S. 12th grade students were near the bottom in science.”<sup>2</sup> The executive director of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) admitted that American science scores have not improved since the mid-1990s.<sup>3</sup>

In 2009 Secretary of Education Arne Duncan noted that an analysis by the National Center for Education Statistics, comparing science scores of 15-year-old students in different countries reported that American students were below average in science. “It has huge implications,” Duncan said. “I think as a real economic imperative we have to educate our way to a better economy.”<sup>4</sup> PBS reported (2010) that America “received a stark wake-up call” when international test results showed other countries were doing better than America in science education.<sup>5</sup> A 2011 report about a national exam “revealed that fewer than one-third of elementary- and high-school students have a solid grasp of science.” Those results were released shortly “after an international science test showed U.S. students trailing their counterparts in many European and Asian countries.”<sup>6</sup> The next year CNN reported that American students ranked 31 out of 65 industrial countries in science and declared it a “disaster in the making.”<sup>7</sup> The same year “The Nation's Report Card” (National Assessment of Educational Progress-NAEP) revealed that “more than two-thirds still lacked a solid grasp of science facts.”<sup>8</sup> The *New York Times* admitted that the “Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study” showed that “U.S. Students Still Lag Globally” in science.<sup>9</sup> Finally, in 2013, a study showed that the problem could not be blamed on poverty because middle class American students ranked 21 out of 40 nations<sup>10</sup> suggesting “the need for better education extends deeply into America's middle class”<sup>11</sup> and Arne Duncan (citing another ranking placing American students 23<sup>rd</sup>) stated that “we're being out-educated.”<sup>12</sup>

As always, the bureaucracy thinks it knows the best way to solve the problem.

### SAME “SOLUTION”

Ignoring the adage that “the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different

results,” educators and politicians think the problem can be fixed by pouring in more money and providing more federal government control.

George Bush's “No Child Left Behind” boondoggle transitioned into the Obama administration's “Race to the Top” which provided the final push toward national standards.<sup>13</sup> The idea of a standardized curriculum sounds good on the surface, but history has shown that government control of education (not just science education) has been a dismal failure. Therefore, *more* government control is *not* the solution.

Nevertheless, in response to a Carnegie Foundation commission statement about the importance of math and science learning,<sup>14</sup> the National Academy of Sciences began to develop (using 18 people) the *Next Generation Science Standards* by developing the “*Framework for K-12 Science Education*,” which was released in 2011.<sup>15</sup> Then powerbrokers in 26 states<sup>16</sup> drafted the **Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)**. **Also, about the same time, state** governors and education officials began the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)<sup>17</sup> which have been adopted by 45 states. Unless CCSS are adopted, states cannot compete for the huge amount of federal dollars from “Race to the Top.”<sup>18</sup> Ultimately, how these two initiatives blend will be up to each state. However, strong evolution advocates\* such as the AAAS and the NSTA are “working collaboratively with states and other stakeholders” to achieve the final product.<sup>19</sup> The NGSS website declares that, “Every effort has been made to ensure consistency between the CCSS and the NGSS.”<sup>20</sup>

I began teaching in 1972 and completely left the system after 2006. I saw many fads and fancy names come and go. It matters little what the gimmicks are called if the students are not learning. Unfortunately, there is something worse than lack of learning and that is being pounded with propaganda.

### BLATANT BIAS

A friend told me (September 2013) that he had recently substituted in a ninth grade biology class. The textbook had a section called “Pseudoscience.” Both Creation Science and Intelligent Design were listed there. The book said:

*'Creation Science' is not science because it does not follow scientific methods. The claim that a deity created the world cannot be tested. Thus, it is not a hypothesis.*” *BSCS Biology- A Molecular Approach*, McGraw-Hill.

The atheist led National Center for Science Education (NCSE) provides plenty of court case documentation that there is no legal remedy to the propagandizing of public school pupils with the faith destroying concept of evolution.<sup>21</sup> Now, the NCSE will censor any scientific

evidence that disputes “climate change.” The NCSE, “which fights the teaching of creationism, announced that it's going to take on climate change denial as well.... NCSE hired climate and environmental education expert Mark McCaffrey as its new climate coordinator... ‘There's a climate of confusion in this country around climate science’ says McCaffrey, and NCSE's goal will be to ensure that “teachers have the tools they need if they get pushback and feel intimidated.”<sup>22</sup> In 2012 McCaffrey was a keynote speaker for a group of atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers, and skeptics.<sup>23</sup> He believes the NGSS “could measurably improve science education.”<sup>24</sup>

The NSTA and the AAAS want schools to teach “man-made climate change starting as early as elementary school and incorporate it into all science classes.” The standards claim that “human activities, such as the release of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels, are major factors in the current rise in Earth’s mean surface temperature (global warming).”<sup>25</sup>

[The belief in man-made climate change will join the belief in evolutionism as foundational issues in science classrooms. Several states](#) have put into place science standards that recommend both subjects be put “into classrooms well before high school.”<sup>26</sup>

As a former middle school teacher I focused on that level and easily found learning objectives for both dogmas. Some samples of the “Core Ideas”<sup>27</sup> follow.

*Students who demonstrate understanding can:*

>Ask questions to clarify evidence of the factors that have caused the rise in global temperatures over the past century.<sup>27</sup>

>Construct an argument supported by evidence for how increases in human population and per-capital consumption of natural resources impact Earth's systems.<sup>28</sup>

>Construct a scientific explanation based on evidence from rock strata for how the geologic time scale is used to organize Earth's 4.6-billion-year-old history.<sup>29</sup>

>Apply scientific ideas to construct an explanation for the anatomical similarities and differences among modern organisms and between modern and fossil organisms to infer evolutionary relationships.<sup>30</sup>

The only evidence allowed is what supports their belief. The beliefs of Christ children are being beaten down.

## PLEA to PASTORS and PARENTS

May Christian pastors and parents not fall into their own version of insanity by trying to do “the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” Fighting Common Core will waste valuable time and effort. As a retired teacher I am convinced public schools cannot be redeemed.<sup>31</sup>

Government school academics are *disastrous*, but more importantly, government school activities are *dangerous*!

The Bible Belt state of West Virginia serves as a prime example. Reported incidents<sup>31</sup> in West Virginia schools represent only a tiny fraction of what really goes on. Saying we should not abandon government schools is like saying the passengers of the Titanic should have stayed aboard because the band was playing good music and the captain was a good man.

Pastors and parents: “Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.” 1 Timothy 6:2

We must RESCUE OUR CHILDREN!

(<http://insectman.us/exodus-mandate-wv/index.htm>)

\*“The AAAS Board of Directors is deeply concerned, therefore, about legislation and policies recently introduced in a number of states and localities that would undermine the teaching of evolution...”  
<http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2006/pdf/0219boardstatement.pdf>

“The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) strongly supports the position that evolution is a major unifying concept in science and should be emphasized in K–12 science education frameworks and curricula.”  
<http://www.nsta.org/about/positions/evolution.aspx>

\*\* From a [dictionary](#):

core: The central, innermost, or most essential part of anything.

idea: (combined definitions): A thought, conception, notion, impression, opinion, view, or belief existing in the mind as a result of mental understanding, awareness, or activity.

From [NextGenerationScience.org](#) (emphasis in the original):

Disciplinary core ideas have the power to focus K–12 science curriculum, instruction and assessments on the most important aspects of science. To be considered core, the ideas should meet at least two of the following criteria and ideally all four:

- Have **broad importance** across multiple sciences or engineering disciplines or be a **key organizing concept** of a single discipline;
- Provide a **key tool** for understanding or investigating more complex ideas and solving problems;
- Relate to the **interests and life experiences of students** or be connected to **societal or personal concerns** that require scientific or technological knowledge;
- Be **teachable** and **learnable** over multiple grades at increasing levels of depth and sophistication.

For the footnotes, please see

<http://www.insectman.us/exodus-mandate-wv/my-articles-2013.htm>