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[Pittsburgh Catholics Against Common Core](#)

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**ALERT**

## **NCEA PROMOTING COMMON CORE AND ITS AGENDA AT UPCOMING CONVENTION (April 22-24)**

\*\*The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) is actively promoting the highly controversial Common Core State Standards in their 2014 Annual Conference and Expo to be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on April 22-24. See here for details and registration: <http://www.ncea.org/convention/convention-and-expo>

\*\*The NCEA is the largest private educational organization in the world and claims to represent over 150,000 teachers and 6 million Catholic school students yet they are ignoring the protests of Catholic school parents and scholars regarding the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in Catholic schools.

\*\*The push by the NCEA to convince Catholic schools to adopt Common Core is the most important topic in Catholic education right now.

The NCEA continues to maintain they do not endorse Common Core and are simply providing information to educators so that they can make informed decisions on whether to adopt the standards in their diocese. The numerous sessions at the conference on Common Core are aimed at instructing educators on how to implement Common Core aligned curricula in their classrooms.

### **We are disturbed by the amount of Common Core lectures including:**

- Collaboration, Communication, Curriculum, Common Core and Catholic Identity: Planning for Instructional Success,
- Summative and Formation Assessment in the Common Core World
- Teaching Students to Understand Deeply: The Common Core and Critical Thinking
- Focus on the Practices in your Common Core Math
- Academic Vocabulary Strategies for the Common Core
- Claim, Analysis, and Controversy: The #Digit Habits and Skills Necessary for Common Core, NETS-S, and Succeeding in a 24-7 Information Age
- Combining Inquiry Mathematics and the Common Core
- Elementary Common Core Alignment for Beginners

- Common Core, Are you Drowning in a Sea of Cs?
- Connecting with the Common Core
- Measuring the Common Core: Teaching and Assessing Emergent Writers
- Unit Planning and the Common Core: A Perfect Match
- Is Christ the Core of Your Standards?
- Forward Looking Math with Backward Design
- Getting to the Core of Language Arts/Science Texts: Picture Books and the Love of Nature
- Grading Practices and the Standards- Based Report Card
- LUMAKids: Using the Arts to Facilitate Thinking
- Writing and Grammar Strategies that Improve Students’ Competence and Confidence

\*\*Most importantly - Robert Marzano is a FEATURED Speaker at this convention. He is not only a proponent of Common Core (see books [here](#)), but his organization [Marzano Research Laboratory](#) now owns an organization called RISC – Reinventing Schools Coalition. <http://www.reinventingschools.org/about/the-risc-approach-to-schooling/>

From the website:

“The RISC Approach to Schooling is a revolutionary approach to education that represents a dramatic shift in the educational process.”

“The RISC Approach to Schooling is the most comprehensive and well articulated approach to standards-based reform in the country.” - Robert J. Marzano

“The RISC philosophy represents a radical paradigm shift from the traditional educational approach to one in which time is the variable and learning is the constant and students take true ownership of their learning.”

<b>TRADITIONAL VS. RISC PHILOSOPHY</b>	
<b>20th Century Classroom</b>	<b>RISC 21st Century Classroom</b>
Movement based on time	<b>Movement based on performance</b>
Students sitting in rows	<b>Controlled chaos</b>
Driven by textbooks	<b>Driven by a shared vision</b>
Commercial bulletin boards	<b>Student boards</b>
Teacher-controlled class	<b>Students are navigators</b>
10% student engagement	<b>100% student engagement</b>
3R’s	<b>Global curriculum</b>
Teacher is the judge	<b>Self, peers, business leaders, and teachers judge students’ work</b>

WHY IS MARZANO A KEYNOTE SPEAKER? Will this new Paradigm shift become the norm in Catholic education? Is the NCEA promoting a new philosophy for Catholic Education, moving further away from traditional and classical ideals? Part of this new paradigm incorporates planned chaos, or Second Order Change – Marzano seems to believe that Common Core IS Second Order Change. Second Order Change challenges DIRECTLY the traditional

methods of teaching for a complete transformation. See this article here titled [“Common Core State Standards and Second Order Change: What Every Administrator Should Know”](#) by Marzano Center Staff as part of his Learning Sciences Marzano Center.

Further, Catholic schools are already using his methods for teaching based on his work “Art and Science of Teaching” - <https://www.catholicmessenger.net/2012/04/professional-development-for-faculty/>. Will teachers be trained to teach using the instructional methods that he requires? And then because Race to the Top funds required teacher evaluation frameworks to be put in place in states that accepted those funds, will his Teacher Evaluation Model be that framework? [http://www.marzanoevaluation.com/evaluation/causal\\_teacher\\_evaluation\\_model/](http://www.marzanoevaluation.com/evaluation/causal_teacher_evaluation_model/) This will include requirements for teacher observations and their adherence to standards and new pedagogy models. Is this what our Catholic school teachers want? Is this what parents want when they choose and pay for Catholic education? Is this what Catholic Education is??

Marzano also appears to have based much of his work off on such Marxist Behaviorists and Psychologists as Benjamin Bloom, Alexander Luria, and Lev Vygotsky, according to researcher Jeannie Georges. [See this video here explaining his methods rooted in their theories - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHIyjajvaSw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHIyjajvaSw).

Also, Marzano essentially rewrote Bloom’s taxonomy in his book called [Designing a New Taxonomy of Educational Objectives](#) - *“Robert Marzano brings Bloom's Taxonomy into the 21st century with a new model that incorporates the latest in cognitive science”*

**Will Marzano’s models be promoted as models for Catholic education? We cannot let these mind control and new age tactics enter our schools! It is important to understand the roots of all of it!**

Also, if as the NCEA states, their purpose in providing lectures on Common Core is to help teachers make an *informed* decision on the adoption of Common Core (as stated by Brother Bimonte, president of the NCEA, in a letter response to our objection to their presentations), shouldn’t they provide *both* sides to their educators?

How in the world can our teachers be expected to discern what is acceptable for our Catholic schools when they are being presented with ONLY glowing reviews of these flawed standards?

Further, our teachers are required to attend this convention, our schools will be closed for three days – The NCEA has a captive audience so that they may present only ONE side of this agenda.

There has been undeniable widespread criticism from Catholic educators and Catholic media. The deficiencies in the Common Core State Standards are so pronounced that 132 prominent Catholic scholars felt compelled to write a letter to all the US Catholic Bishops late last year requesting that the standards either not be adopted or their implementation halted in all Catholic schools. Some Bishops have spoken out and declined to implement Common Core in their dioceses. Despite this heated opposition, the NCEA continues to turn a deaf ear to parents, educators, and religious leaders who oppose these standards.

**Common Core and its web of theories and methods surrounding them are a grave danger to Catholic education.**

Educators do not universally accept them, yet the NCEA continues to aggressively promote them at their upcoming conference. *The adoption of curricula aligned to Common Core, as well as the associated frameworks, will transform Catholic education and make it virtually unrecognizable. Will teachers and parents stand up and say NO?*

**Of note, there are many other questionable presentations that fit the agenda to transform Catholic Education:**

- New Models for School change
- A New Way to Teach Conscience Formation
- Blended Learning Strategies: Planning, Implementation of Budgeting for Efficiencies
- Teaching to the adolescent brain
- When Parents Bully the School (???)
- The Cristo Rey Model: The Resurgence of American Catholic Urban Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – *(this was a GATES FUNDED PROJECT!!)*
- No more exams! A project based curriculum that works for everyone
- Prayer and Rituals for the classroom *(rituals???)*
- The Paperless Classroom
- Power your classroom with STEM energy
- THE PHILADELPHIA STORY: A NEW CATHOLIC SCHOOL MODEL *(this is about the Independence Mission Schools consortium – are these schools really Catholic?)*
- The power of collaboration among Catholic, charter, and public schools.
- The power of formative assessment
- Have you flipped your engaged learning, project-based, student-centered, creative, TEAL, authentically assessed, 21st century, inquiry classroom?
- Federal Education Programs and Benefits for Private School Students and Teachers
- Advancing the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools Tier II: What Do We Do in a School after Assessments Yield Substantive Evidence?