

Resolution Opposing Federal Intrusion in State Education Content Standards

WHEREAS, the mission of the American Legislative Exchange Council (“ALEC”) is, in part, to advance Jeffersonian principles, including respect for federalism and the prerogatives of the states; and

WHEREAS, education is inherently a state issue since those closest to students—local schools, districts and states—have always been best equipped to make appropriate educational decisions, including choosing academic content standards; and

WHEREAS, states began working together over a decade ago to identify the knowledge and skills in the foundational subjects of English language arts and mathematics necessary to succeed in college and careers after high school; and

WHEREAS, states had been graduating students from high school who were underprepared for the challenges of the real world and an increasingly competitive global economy where education and innovation are key drivers; and

WHEREAS, states, working with their own higher education and business communities to set high standards for high school completion, found those standards were becoming increasingly common across state lines; and

WHEREAS, 48 states agreed in 2009 to develop a set of internally benchmarked K–12 educational standards known as the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics that will better prepare students for success in college and careers by giving the academic foundation they need in the core subjects of English and mathematics; and

WHEREAS, this state-led collaborative effort occurred without federal funding, influence or input, utilizing the best standards of the states themselves and those of other countries—producing standards that the Fordham Foundation called “clearly superior to those in place in the vast majority of states;” and

WHEREAS, More than 40 states have since, individually and on their own, chosen to adopt those high standards as their states’ K–12 standards in English and mathematics, each state following its own specific constitutional processes, requirements and prerogatives; and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of states, districts and schools to implement their chosen standards. Implementation includes, but is not limited to, choosing curriculum, textbooks and other classroom materials, assessments and professional development. These choices are solely the prerogative of states, districts and schools; and

WHEREAS, Any federal government action, through administrative fiat or congressional act, to dictate or prescribe a particular set of academic content standards—

or to dictate how such standards are implemented—is an intrusion into the states’ long-established rights and responsibilities to deliver K–12 education which violates fundamental principles of federalism; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that ALEC vigorously opposes any effort by the federal government to deny the authority of any state to set its own education academic content standards or to attempt to overturn decisions made duly by a state regarding any education standards deemed by the constitutionally-designated authorities in that state to be in the best interest of that state’s children.



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