

From: [Susan HICKS](#)
To: [AZSBE Inbox](#)
Subject: 2016 ARIZONA DRAFT STANDARDS
Date: Thursday, September 29, 2016 7:59:28 AM

Dear State Board,

The "revision" is not acceptable. Let's see some real educational revisions! Now is the time to get it right for our children!

"In spite of 6,000 volunteer hours to complete a comprehensive revision on the standards," the 2016 Arizona Draft Standards have hardly been changed, especially for Kindergarten through Grade 3. They are still Common Core. They are still developmentally inappropriate.

Grades K-3 are critically important, because whatever is learned in these grades affects a child's success in every grade that follows. The English Language Arts and Math Executive Summaries indicate that the review Committees considered Clarity, Cognitive Demand, and Measurability.

Members of the Arizona public brought forth this concern over a year ago. Child development professionals all across America did, too, before and after the Standards were released in June 2010.

This is an astonishing omission, because I'm sure that every teacher has been required to take at least one course in early child development in college.

According to clinical child psychologist Dr. Megan Koschnick, and other experts in this field, young children are not little adults. Their brains haven't developed to where they can reflect on their own thinking. They cannot think abstractly. They cannot understand another person's perspective. Learning to identify numbers and letters is far different from learning to perform mathematical operations and to read with understanding.

Kindergartners are internally motivated to be independent and creative. They want to dress themselves on their own, paint, dance, recite stories, build a fort. They're openly proud of their accomplishments....

Since 1990, creativity has steadily diminished in American classrooms. Part of the problem is an obsession with standards. In Kindergarten English Language Arts alone, there are 50 standards. If you include every itemized standard within a standard, there are 77. And this doesn't include Kindergarten Math standards, of which there are 35!

The pressure of implementing the standards leads many kindergarten teachers to resort to inappropriate didactic methods combined with frequent testing. Teacher-led instruction in kindergartens has almost entirely replaced the active, play-based, experiential learning that we know children need from decades of research in cognitive and developmental psychology and neuroscience."

"K-3 is not the time to encourage dependence and conformity. It is not the time to demand that young children collaborate and seek their peers' opinions and suggestions about their work."

Sincerely,
Susan Hicks
Gilbert, AZ

IWe should encourage their independence and unique abilities. This is when teachers have a Golden Opportunity to introduce age-appropriate materials.