

Testimony
By
MerryLynn Gerstenschlager
Before the
Senate Committee on Education
On
Thursday, January 31, 2013

**Texas Eagle Forum and MerryLynn Gerstenschlager
OPPOSE CSCOPE Curriculum due to lack of transparency**

My name is MerryLynn Gerstenschlager and I am here as the Vice President and Education Liaison for Texas Eagle Forum... I am also here as a grandparent and the parent of two adult children who attended Texas public schools.

I'd like to begin by reading from the **Texas Education Code, Section 26.006...**

“ACCESS TO TEACHING MATERIALS. (a) A parent is entitled to:

(1) review all teaching materials, instructional materials, and other teaching aids used in the classroom of the parent's child; and

(2) review each test administered to the parent's child after the test is administered.

(b) A school district shall make teaching materials and tests readily available for review by parents.”

It goes on to say that children may take the materials home with them.

Today I want to address the secrecy inherent in CSCOPE. CSCOPE accentuates my past concerns about the difficulty in reviewing the curriculum in digital textbooks, as well as the Internet links peppered throughout textbooks.

Why are teachers prohibited from revealing what is in the CSCOPE curriculum? While CSCOPE is digital...and copyrighted...I'd like to remind you that all hardcopy textbooks are copyrighted. However, they are available for public scrutiny.

I'd like to remind the committee that, here in America, the government works for the people. The Texas Education Agency, teachers, the Education Service Centers, and the State Board of Education all work for the citizens and taxpayers. Our children are entrusted to public schools for a huge part of their lives. Children belong to their parents and not to the state. It is incomprehensible that the state would deny any parent or taxpayer the right to inspect anything that is taught to our children. This is about parental rights, accountability, and transparency.

If CSCOPE has nothing to hide, then they should make their material available for public inspection.

As taxpayers and parents, we have every right to know how our money is being spent by our government and what the state is teaching our children and grandchildren.

In conclusion, please take the veil off CSCOPE so that we know what our children and our grandchildren are learning and what we are getting for our money.

Thank you!

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