Mission Statement

As an informed group comprised of educators, students, community members and other stakeholders, we are committed to working together to educate ourselves, peacefully assemble, and exercise our rights as concerned citizens regarding the implementation of Common Core and the use of high-stakes standardized testing.

Document Outline

This document is comprised of 5 teams:

1. Research and Resources
2. Grassroots Activism
3. Politics
4. Alternative Schooling
5. Messaging and Public Relations

This document, in its entirety, is meant to be a comprehensive guide to educate the community and assist individuals in finding the necessary resources to start and sustain an opposition movement to Common Core State Standards and the use of high-stakes standardized testing. This document's purpose along with the purpose of the We Will Not Conform Event is to empower and mobilize groups of informed citizens across the country regardless of party affiliation.

Team 1: Research and Resources
Action Step – Educate yourself so you can educate others!

To have an impact and to sustain a movement, members must be well informed on the pertinent issues. Being educated on the issues is not only beneficial to your voice or position, but it enables you to educate others as well.

As you conduct the necessary research, you will discover connections among corporations, politicians, and education reformers. Understanding the key players in the planning, creation, and execution of Common Core and the use of high-stakes testing is essential in pushing your movement forward.

You must conduct extensive research and not go it alone. Connect with people who can help you get the answers you need. Stay abreast of new information and be committed to becoming an expert in this area.

✔	Research & Resources Checklist
	Get to know the US Department of Education's Blueprint for Reform. • This is where the standards were born. • Link **HERE**: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf
	Read the Common Core standards. • Know what they are. **HERE:** http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/
	Familiarize yourself with all of the Common Core resources (white papers, videos, and fact sheets). • FreedomWorks **HERE:** http://www.freedomworks.org/campaign/common-core • Pioneer Institute **HERE**: http://bit.ly/1v9Mh6t & Video **HERE**: http://bit.ly/1iyXvkX • Heritage Foundation Video **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1wBtt2J • Truth in American Education **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1ls7ub0 • Common Core Critics Fact Sheet **HERE**: http://bit.ly/1dyUyy & Video: http://bit.ly/TAUXH9 • Stop Common Core Videos (1-5) **HERE: :** http://bit.ly/1lhqMuS
	Read your state's Race to the Top application. • **HERE:** http://1.usa.gov/1pmEDZe
	Follow the money. • Find out how testing companies are lobbying in your state. • Link to Pearson's lobby information **HERE**: http://bit.ly/1kasNd5

✔	Research & Resources Checklist

	Get to know who is behind the Common Core State Standards
	• A list of people, the companies they are affiliated with and short bios of everyone behind Common Core
	    o **HERE**: http://wapo.st/1rl0kpZ
	    o **HERE:** http://bit.ly/U3YjlR
	• Understand the role of The Gates Foundation in implementing Race to the Top and Common Core.
	• See if your state or district has received professional development grant money from Gates.
	    o **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1yRnBo2

	Get to know Jeb Bush, his influence in education policy for the last 15 years, and his role in Common Core. • He's a potential presidential candidate in 2016. • His influence is considerable and makes Florida "Ground Zero" for Common Core. • Stop Common Core in Florida, and it will be easier around the country. o **HERE** http://bit.ly/1yIzNfE
	Visit your State Board of Education website and look for meeting minutes on Common Core. • January 2010 to June or July 2010 is when these changes were starting to take place. • See what has been promised, and see if you have any allies. o **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1nYMmar
	Find anti-Common Core legislation proposed in your state. • **HERE:** http://bit.ly/NXijnv

	Know your rights for opting out of the Common Core Tests.
	• Your rights will be outlined in your school's privacy statements.
	    o Example **HERE:** http://bit.ly/Tmjq2s
	• Visit United Opt Out to learn more about your state's opt-out guidelines & groups.
	    o **HERE:** http://unitedoptout.com/
	    o **HERE:** http://www.concernedparentsofcalifornia.com

	Understand your rights under Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
	• FERPA overview **HERE:** http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html
	    o Understand that FERPA has been gutted so it is no longer a mandate but rather a best practice.
	    o Make sure your school and district are using FERPA guidelines.
	• Be sure your child's rights are not being violated.
	• Be sure your school and district are abiding by FERPA laws in regards to students' scores and information.
	• Information regarding FERPA **HERE**: http://epic.org/apa/ferpa/
	• Persuade legislators to be proactive in protecting your child's data.

✔	**Research & Resources Checklist**

	Understand what is happening to your child's test data.
	• Find out the school or district's data policy.
	  o Are they storing it and/or sharing it with other entities?
	  o Are you entitled to see your child's data?
	• Find the website for your state's Longitudinal Data System (LDS).
	  o Every state has its own LDS. Get to know yours.
	  o Helpful Links to the 400 Data Points that can be tracked.

	Get to know your school board of education (BOE) and how they vote on Common Core and high-stakes testing. • Some will have this information published based on votes or public hearings (minutes from BOE meeting when Common Core was implemented may reveal allies). • Pick up the phone and call your BOE and ask how they are voting on Common Core and high-stakes testing.

	Get to know all the education players in your community and state and find out where they stand on the issues:
	• State Superintendent or Lead State Education Official (available on each state's Department of Education website)
	  o Example **HERE***: http://bit.ly/TmOsan
	  o Find your state **HERE:** http://1.usa.gov/1rDStn6
	• State Board of Education Members – same as above
	• Local School Board Members
	• Local Superintendent/Principal (local school/district webpage).
	  o Find your school **HERE**: http://1.usa.gov/1g4zu3W

	Get to know the textbooks and ancillary materials your child is using in school. • Who is the publisher? • Are they Common Core aligned? • Is the publisher the same company as the one building the Common Core test? • Find samples of Common Core aligned texts and resources at Amazon and other booksellers **HERE:** http://amzn.to/1oev8oj and http://bit.ly/1m9rXBR

One of the biggest issues surrounding Common Core is the retrieval, storage, and later use of your child's test and demographic data. Find out how this data is being used. Find out if you have rights to your child's data. Every state is different.

✔	**Research & Resources Checklist**

	Get to know the high-stakes tests your state and district will use for Common Core.
	• There is a blueprint or outline for every test. Find the blueprint and know it well.
	  o What standards are tested?
	  o At what level of complexity are the questions?
	  o How will your child fare on these tests?
	• You can go directly to tests' websites as well.
	  o **Smarter Balance** test **HERE**: http://www.smarterbalanced.org/
	  o **PARCC** test HERE: http://www.parcconline.org/
	  o **AIR** tests HERE: http://www.air.org
	
	*Some states opted out of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) & the Smarter Balance exams. That does **NOT** mean they are exempt from Common Core exams. It just means they have chosen a different testing company to build the Common Core test. For example, in Florida AIR.org will be building the Common Core assessments. **There will be a test**. Find out what company is building your state test.*

	Attend a **FREE** webinar by ConversationED on August 24th and get educated on high-stakes tests and what you can do in your area to boycott these tests.
	• Webinar includes:
	  o A guide to building and growing a grassroots movement in your community.
	  o A step-by-step process for boycotting tests in your district.
	  o What to do when district and state officials try to intimidate you.
	  o Alternatives to testing.
	How to ask for a portfolio and other alternative assessments.
	• Sign up **HERE** http://conversationed.com/webinar/

Team 2: Grassroots Activism
Action Step – Engage!

Every school, district, and state is different in their adoption of Common Core and the use of high-stakes standardized testing. Therefore, a local, grassroots initiative is essential to effect the specific changes needed for each unique community. The way revolutions start is with a small group of homegrown, frustrated, informed citizens.

Provide opportunities for your community to come together and share ideas. This will help you enlist the strengths and talents parents, teachers, administrators, local businesses, and other community members have to enhance your cause. Encourage students in your community to speak out and join the grassroots activism in your local community. Finally, don't be afraid of technology and social media, because these tools are the key to growing a grassroots initiative.

	Grassroots Activism Checklist
	Connect with other activists in your state. • No one person can do everything that needs to be done. • The Common Core proponents have massive funding and the support of the elitists in both parties. To win, activists need to be part of a team. • A list of anti-Common Core websites state-by-state **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1lSCFvJ

	Make sure your state's effort is connected to the efforts in other states.
	• A great place to start is
	    o http://truthinamericaneducation.com/
	    o http://conversationed.com
	• Familiarity with the activists in other states provides intelligence as to what our opponents are doing, saves time by not having to reinvent the wheel, and helps with the refinement of strategies.
	    o http://www.concernedparentsofcalifornia.com

	Divide the work. • The best state networks have divided the work, with some individuals concentrating on writing, others on research, others on contacting legislators, and still others in working with the media.

	Attend your school board meetings.
	• Become known in the community.
	• Take Common Core education materials to local group meetings, PTA, etc.
	    o Materials **HERE:**
	        ■ Anti-CC White Paper: http://bit.ly/1v9Mh6t
	        ■ CC 2-pg Fact Sheet: http://bit.ly/1dyUyyd
	        ■ CC 1-pg Tip Sheet: http://bit.ly/1yRwa25

	Grassroots Activism Checklist
	Develop brochures and flyers. - A simple flyer can be your greatest recruiting tool with key facts, action items with numbers of whom to contact and how to obtain more information. - Include in the flyer a list of national and local groups that oppose Common Core. - Sample **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1mO7YZ9
	Develop an interesting and engaging presentation. - Make it as concise and informative as possible. - Example **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1wBLOMR
	Engage your Local Superintendent, State Superintendent (or Lead State Education Official), and State Board of Education Members. - Know where they stand on the issue. - Present them with information regarding community concerns.
	Initiate a letter-writing campaign. Relevant addresses are available on websites for federal reps, state reps, and school board members.
	Question your Representative and Senator and document their answers: 1. What is the cost analysis of Common Core? 2. What will this cost us? 3. Where is the money coming from? 4. How can we amend the standards? 5. What are the scientific studies upon which the academic foundations of Common Core rest? 6. How can you opt your child out of the data tracking system (P20w Longitudinal System) and what is the process to do this? 7. Do you believe in the 10th Amendment, and how (if they support CC) can you support CC given that it ignores the 10th Amendment?
	What do you do if your local legislatures ask, 'if we repeal Common Core, what do we replace it with?' - Answer: You present road-tested alternatives with standards that are ranked higher than Common Core. - Samples **HERE:** http://www.scpie.org/alternatives/
	Get the attention of the local media. - Host rallies, protests, and other opportunities to get your voice heard. - Call local news media and tell them in advance about rallies and protests your group will be initiating.
	Become a citizen journalist. - Write Op-Ed letters - Request permission from your local newspapers to report on Common Core and high-stakes testing issues.
	Enlist key players in your community to join the movement. - Parents, teachers, administrators and business members. - Students are essential in building the movement. They hate what is happening in schools. Talk to their parents and get the students to join the movement.

	Grassroots Activism Checklist

	Use social media to mobilize your grassroots effort.
	• Start your own Opt Out Facebook group
	    ○ Opt Out Toolkit
	    HERE: http://optoutorlando.wordpress.com/opt-out-florida-3/opt-out-toolkit-2/
	• If you are inexperienced in this area, find someone who can manage your social media message for you.
	    ○ Get a student to run your social media message (get parent permission).
	    ○ Students are experts in social media messaging.
	• Create a Facebook page where people can share ideas and concerns.
	    ○ This is one of the most effective ways to connect with people who want to help you.
	    ○ Example **HERE:** https://www.facebook.com/groups/OptOutOrlando/
	• Twitter
	    ○ Use hashtags to engage your audience
	    Example: #CCSS, #stopcommoncore, #StopJebNow, #EdReform, #LetTeachersTeach, #OptOut
	• Instagram/Pinterest
	    ○ Create anti-Common Core memes to share in your social media news feeds.
	    Example: http://bit.ly/1yS05ah
	
	Be sure to leverage the influence and expansion social media provides. Start your own Facebook groups or join others. Use twitter to send messages. Revolutions are possible when we use social media to connect.

	Join a Coalition • Example of a Florida coalition HERE: http://www.flstopcccoalition.org/about-us/
	Get to know the people and sites for online activism. • Here's a partial list of anti-Common Core websites state-by-state. **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1lSCFvJ

	Teachers and educators can form their own grassroots movements within their respective schools and districts.
	• Understand the legislation.
	• Read the Race to the Top Grant and learn how it is influencing school/district policy.
	    ○ Details **HERE:** http://1.usa.gov/1pmEDZe
	• Know the test specifications and content focus for the Common Core assessments.
	    ○ Specific details **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1qmH0sU
	• Watch these videos for teacher testimonials on why Common Core fails
	    HERE: http://bit.ly/1vSJY8a and http://bit.ly/1n8BYiQ

Grassroots Activism Checklist

Build a website for your cause.
- Enlist the help of a web designer who believes in the cause to help you build a functional and interactive site.
- How to set up anti-Common Core website.
  - *Example* – R.O.P.E. http://bit.ly/1jo0O9l
- Create a "Take Action" page on your local site (how to contact legislators, school boards, governor, etc)
  - *Example:* (legislature) http://bit.ly/1li5r4p
  - *Example:* (governor) http://1.usa.gov/1li5wFl

A website is a powerful tool to disseminate information. Find someone who is web design savvy and who believes in your movement. See if he or she will help you design and launch a site. Although websites can be costly, outsourcing this task is more cost effective than trying to go it alone.

Team 3: Politics
Action Step: Engage!
Action at the Local Level

Too often people are more concerned with national elections than they are with their local-level politics. But in reality, public officials at the local level affect our day-to-day lives more than public officials at the national level. Therefore, a grassroots, community-based effort is essential in raising awareness about our concerns regarding Common Core and high-stakes testing.

> *If you are unhappy about Common Core and high-stakes testing, the local level is where you need to focus your political efforts.*

If you are unhappy about Common Core and high-stakes testing, the local level is where you need to focus your political efforts. Below is a checklist for reference on how to cross your t's and dot your i's when starting an education movement in your community.

	Action at the Local Level Checklist
	Get educated. • Go to http://www.corestandards.org and read the standards. Understand what the standards are all about. • Get to know the *legislation* for your state regarding anything related to Race to the Top (RTTT), Common Core, and high-stakes testing (also referred to as standardized testing). • Make sure you are informed of changes happening in your district because of RTTT and Common Core.
	Get to know your local school board. • Who are the members? • What are their positions? • What outside vendors have they hired to provide textbooks, testing materials and other Common Core Standards and Common Core test-related material?
	Attend school board meetings on a regular basis. • The more informed you are about your school district's policies, the better position you are in to address issues with the board. • Enlist community members to attend these meetings with you. o There's power in numbers. Get others to attend board meetings with you.
	Address the school board during public comments. • Check district policy regarding when public comments will be heard. • Verbalize your concerns directly to the board. • Enlist other community members to speak on the same issue.

Action at the Local Level Checklist

Ask your local education officials specific questions regarding high-stakes testing.

For principals:

1. How many standardized tests does my child have to take this year?
2. Where do these tests originate?
3. What is the specific academic purpose for each one?
4. How will these tests affect my child's academic future or standing?
5. For each test, does the teacher see individual student results and have a chance to adjust individual instruction to help each student?
6. Who sees the scores, where will they be recorded, and for what purpose?
7. Do the scores become part of my child's record?
8. Who in the district instructed you to give these tests?
9. When are tests given throughout the year?
10. What does the testing calendar look like (INCLUDING RETAKES)?

> *Every test is used differently. Some are high-stakes and determine grade promotion or graduation. Districts give other assessments for their own data collection purposes and for RTTT money. In many respects, districts test far more than the state and federal government require. Find out if your district is testing more than required or if they are over-testing to adhere to the RTTT grant.*

For school superintendents:

1. Identify by name and frequency each standardized test your district requires in each grade.
2. Explain where these tests originate and, for each, explain its specific academic purpose and the year it started.

For school board members:

1. How do you view the academic purposes for standardized testing?
2. Are you familiar with all the standardized tests your district requires, and their academic purposes?
3. Are you willing to initiate a parent/teacher review of the use of testing in your district?

For school board attorneys:

o Explain your district's policy on opting out of/refusing standardized tests and cite its legal foundation.

Educate your school board on the issue.
- Email campaigns that include current news about high-stakes testing and Common Core to board members.
    o Ask for their opinion to be returned.
- Present information that will educate the board to your issue. Many board members have no idea what is going on in the actual buildings of schools.

Find out which members of your school board do NOT support Common Core.
- Ask one of them to introduce a resolution against Common Core.
- Petition them to focus on returning education to local control.

Petition your school board.
- Use this site to create local petitions: http://www.ipetitions.com/

Action at the Local Level Checklist

	Be persistent. • They will ignore you over and over again. • ***Keep your efforts frequent, informative, and consistent***.
	Identify your local *Stop Common Core* and *Opt Out* groups. • Most groups have a Facebook account. Connect with them there. • These groups are in or near your community. • Members are usually educated on the legislation of your particular state and district. • They can help you understand your rights. • They can help you with the processes you can use to take a stand. • Join them and see what you can do to help. For example, here are two local Opt Out and Stop Common Core Groups in Florida: • Opt Out Orlando https://www.facebook.com/groups/OptOutOrlando/ • Florida Stop Common Core Coalition - http://www.flstopcccoalition.org *Be sure to leverage the influence and expansion social media provides. Start your own Facebook groups or join others. Use twitter to send messages. Revolutions are possible when we use social media to connect.*
	Boycott any test that is aligned with Common Core or any test that does not guide instruction or has punitive damages to students, teachers, and schools. • Get educated on your rights and exercise them. • Inform your community and encourage them to boycott with you. • Remember: there is power in numbers.

	If you are unhappy with your local representation, consider running for school board.
	• Helpful suggestions on running for your school board **HERE:**
	    o http://runningforschoolboard.info/
	    o http://bit.ly/1rbq207
	    o http://abt.cm/1mO2f79
	    o http://bit.ly/TV9UUh

Action at the State Level

Once you have mobilized your community to taking local action, you might also want to petition the state. The state is where districts get their money. The state is the boss and if we want real change, we will eventually need the state to make better education policy decisions. When you are ready, here are a few things to consider when mobilizing at the state level.

Action at the State Level Checklist

Get informed on education legislation in your state.
• Every state is different, and it is essential you become thoroughly informed on specific legislation regarding:
   o Common Core
   o High-Stakes testing
   o Grade retention policies
   o Graduation policies

File a Freedom of Information (FOIA) Request • Every state has public information laws and every state is different. • Find your state FOIA **HERE**: http://www.foiadvocates.com/records.html
Find a list of states fighting back against Common Core • Research what they are doing to stop Common Core. • Find states pushing back on Common Core.   o Here is a map identifying states pushing back on Common Core. http://truthinamericaneducation.com/common-core-state-standards/states-fighting-back-map/ • Enlist the strategies these states are successfully using, and develop a plan to petition your state.

Consider running for or helping someone run for state office.
• Every state has specific qualifying information.
• Visit your state's elections website and look for a qualifying information page.
   o Example **HERE**: http://election.dos.state.fl.us/candidate/Qualifying-info.shtml
   o Example **HERE:** http://www.nycivic.org/story/candidate-college-10-essential-tips-running-office

Be persistent • If you were ignored at the local level, you can bet you'll be ignored at the state level. • ***Keep your efforts frequent, informed, and consistent.***

Action at the Federal Level

Common Core adoption and the high-stakes tests used to accompany Common Core are decisions made at the state level. However, states agreed to this policy because they were promised hundreds of millions of federal dollars in Race to the Top grant money. That money came from President Obama's Recovery Act. Some states, like Florida, received hundreds of millions of dollars for adopting these standards and agreeing to use the tests, curriculum, and books that go with the standards.

Bottom line, we don't want the money because what comes with it are increasing federal, bureaucratic demands that impede our local education systems.

Action at the Federal Level Checklist
Be informed about mid-term elections. • Identify positions on Common Core, Race to the Top, and other education reform efforts.
Participate in national efforts to stop Common Core and standardized testing. • Sign and disseminate this national petition: http://grassfire.com/2014/02/stop-common-core/
Participate in mid-term elections. • Find out where your representative stands on Common Core. All 435 seats in the House of Representatives are up for election on November 4. • Find out if your representative co-sponsored legislation to rein in Common Core, HR 4008 by Rep. Phil Gingrey to prevent coercion to adopt standards. • Find out who your representatives are by following this link: http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/ • Find out if your senator has co-sponsored S.1971 (similar to HR 4008) by Senator Roberts and if not, ask them to do so. • Find out if your senator signed Sen. Charles Grassley's letter last March asking for their vote to defund Common Core in Congress at the following link: http://www.scribd.com/doc/213995040/Common-Core-Dear-Colleague-1 • Find out if your member of Congress will sponsor or support legislation to rein in federal data collection and sharing, such as re-writing FERPA." Follow these links: http://bit.ly/U6thd5 and http://bit.ly/1r0GAc3.
Read the 2015 Budget Proposal for the Department of Education. • Show your federal legislators all of the places in this budget that set up similar situations to Common Core. o 2015 Budget Proposal: http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget15/index.html?exp=0
Educate your federal legislative branch. • Help them understand the impact of programs like Race to the Top. • Ask them to join your LOCAL Level Act or similar legislation. • ***Keep your efforts frequent, informed, and consistent.***

Team 4: Alternative Schooling
Action Step – Educate and Engage!

Some families are deciding to take matters into their own hands and homeschool their children. The decision to remove your child from school is one not to be taken lightly and there are community and online resources to help you with this decision. If alternative schooling or homeschooling is something you are already doing, reach out to others and help to inform them on the benefits and challenges of this choice. An educated and well-informed decision is one that will benefit all parties involved, especially our children.

Alternative Schooling Checklist
Research Homeschooling movements in your community. • Lots of people homeschool for different reasons. • Find a group you identify with and get connected.
Check out homeschooling resources. • http://www.theoldschoolhouse.com • http://thehomeschoolmagazine.com
Join your local Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA). • Find your state HERE: http://www.hslda.org/hs/default.asp • Homeschool families should find out the status of Common Core for homeschoolers in their state. HERE: http://www.hslda.org/commoncore/ • Watch this video by HSLDA to better understand Common Core HERE: http://bit.ly/1qP7ANf
Get to know what other homeschooling families are doing to fight back against Common Core. • Contact your state legislators to defund or repeal Common Core. o Talking points and sample letter HERE: http://www.hslda.org/commoncore/state.aspx • Contact your federal representatives and ask them to introduce or support legislation that will cut off further Race to the Top funding. o Talking points and sample letter HERE: http://www.hslda.org/commoncore/federal.aspx • Spread the word. Educate your friends about the dangers of Common Core and get them to join you in fighting back. • Sign up for HSLDA e-alerts to get updates on impending Common Core legislation that will impact you. o HERE: http://www.hslda.org/elert/
Get to know online schools that work with and support homeschoolers. • Liberty University Online Academy (grades K-12) provides students the support of a traditional, residential, Academy while enrolled in a technology-based online homeschooling academic program. o HERE: http://www.liberty.edu/onlineacademy/

Alternative Schooling Checklist

| | Explore non-Common Core aligned textbooks and ancillary materials.
• *Example:* Kimber Academy is not aligned with Common Core. It gives curriculum guidelines that bring morals and patriotism back into the classroom, and offers guidelines that you can use in your own home.
    o **HERE:** http://kimber.academy/
• Know where various homeschool curriculum providers stand on Common Core and if they are CCSS aligned. Check for a comprehensive list.
    o **HERE** : http://bit.ly/1pT46al |

| | Steps for Catholic School/Christian School students.
• Ask your school administrators for the following information:
  1. Curriculum plan and whether it aligns with Common Core.
  2. Diocese technology plan.
  3. Assessment and testing plan.
  4. Textbook lists.
  5. Ask how all of this will function in light of the testing, assessment, and digital learning push required by Common Core. |

> *Find out if your Diocese has a governance manual/framework outlining the role of the pastor, administrators, parishioners, and parents. This will help you find out who makes various decisions and how they are made, which can help in your conversations.*

Talk to your principal, pastor, and school administrators about alternatives to Common Core.
• Information on *Classical Catholic Education* **HERE:** http://bit.ly/1sS3NAo
• Alternative curricula resources
    o **HERE:** http://www.setonhome.org/
    o http://www.memoriapress.com/
    o http://www.k4j.org/
    o http://bit.ly/TJZZB4
    o http://www.kolbe.org/
    o http://www.cardinalnewmansociety.org

Propose to your principal or school administrator that they form a Christian Education Accountability Plan.
• This could be done through parent-teacher groups. It would be formalized and part of the school handbook or guidelines.
• The plan should include:
    o A review of any documents, textbooks, supplemental materials and activities that parents and teachers find during the course of the year to be objectionable and not aligned with Christian teachings.
    o Guidance and follow-up training to educators on which material was objectionable and why.
    o Alternate material that is aligned with Christian beliefs and is further reviewed by parents and teachers.

Get to know the major Christian school organizations.
• American Association of Christian Schools (AACS) www.aacs.org
• Association of Christian School International (ACSI) www.acsiglobal.org

Team 5: Messaging and Public Relations

Action Step – Use best messaging practices and tactics.

People from both sides of the political spectrum agree, Common Core is detrimental to authentic and individualized learning, and the over use and over emphasis of high-stakes tests is hurting students and educators. It's important to leverage the common ground and the common frustration we are all experiencing regarding Race to the Top and Common Core.

For both sides to come together, thus growing a larger more effective movement, we cannot get hung up on politics or ideology. Instead, focus the message on aspects everyone who is fighting Common Core can agree on.

It is essential when disseminating information about this movement we keep the message clear, concise and focused on common ground.

	Messaging and Public Relations Checklist
	Keep message focused on students NOT politics. • The best thing about this movement is we all care about our children regardless of party affiliation. • Keep it personal by making it about your child. Use an example from your child's work/experience. We all can relate to the personal.
	Identify YOUR concern and craft a short and concise message around it. • Keep the messages short and simple. • Don't overload your audience with too much information at once.
	Don't be afraid of repeating key messages and be consistent. • Consistency and repetition is important when you're crafting an effective and enduring message. • Even if you feel like you're saying the same thing over and over this audience may be hearing it for the first time.
	Talk about LOSS OF LOCAL CONTROL • What does it mean for parents to lose control over their child's education?
	Be persistent. • If you were ignored at the local level, you can bet you'll be ignored at the state level. • ***Keep your efforts frequent, informed, and consistent.***
	Don't scare people. • Ideological rants on either side are detrimental to the cause. • Inform people without scaring them.
	Always be respectful. • The argument is lost when it becomes angry or vindictive.
	Help people educate themselves on the issues. • Provide important information and resources. • Let people see for themselves and draw conclusions based on accurate information.

	Messaging and Public Relations Checklist
	Tailor your message. • Whenever you have a chance to speak to individuals or groups, be sure the message is specific to them. • Blanketed statements used for everyone are inauthentic and do not have as much of an impact as messages tailored to specific individuals or groups.
	Be persistent and polite. • They will ignore you or try to make you go away. • Keep going and keep pushing. • Be classy and respectful. • ***Keep your efforts frequent, informed, and consistent.***

	Use phrases that work:
	• Common Core is age/developmentally inappropriate.
	• Common Core is not internationally benchmarked.
	• Common Core is a fundamentally flawed experiment.
	• The benefits cited by pro Common Core people are unproven and mostly untested.
	    o Follow up by saying, "Common Core is being tested right now on our kids."
	    o Refer back to the 'fundamentally flawed experiment' line.
	• The standards will be costly to states and taxpayers to implement.
	• Common Core does not support STEM.
	• No early education experts were involved in creation of the standards.
	    o In fact two early education experts Marion Brady and John T. Spencer speak out against CCSS **HERE**: http://wapo.st/1mU2hJ5
	• Common Core represents a loss of local control of education.
	
	The pro-Common Core crowd has been working on developing, implementing and messaging Common Core for years and years. Take their messaging techniques and use them to enhance yours.

	Learn from those who are supporting and pushing Common Core. They have been at this a while. • Use their strategy and enhance yours. • Two great websites with PDFs on messaging for common core. **HERE**: http://bit.ly/1zJm2c5 and http://bit.ly/UcEAkc