



A Floor Not a Ceiling: The Common Core and Gifted Students

JONATHAN PLUCKER

OCTOBER 19, 2015

ITAG ANNUAL CONFERENCE




5 Common Myths about CCSS and Gifted Students

FULL PAPER AT: [HTTP://EDEXCELLENCE.NET/PUBLICATIONS/COMMON-CORE-AND-AMERICAS-HIGH-ACHIEVING-STUDENTS](http://edexcellence.net/publications/common-core-and-americas-high-achieving-students)

LINK IS ON UPPER LEFT OF PAGE.

1. "We don't need gifted education anymore."

- ▶ Or "We don't need ability grouping anymore."
- ▶ CCSS are a floor, not a ceiling.
 - ▶ Some states needed a new floor, others really didn't.
- ▶ States can (and are) supplementing the Core.



If we lowered the speed limit to 40 or raised it to 90, we wouldn't get rid of driver's education programs.

THE RIGOR OF TRAFFIC LAWS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HOW WE TEACH DRIVING. THE FRAMEWORK IS JUST THE FRAMEWORK.

2. "CCSS are 'ready to go.'"

- ▶ Math standards aren't fully developed beyond Algebra 2.
- ▶ Developers fully expected Core to be supplemented.

3. “CCSS assessments are adaptive.”

- ▶ Not really.
- ▶ “Wild West of CCSS Assessment”
- ▶ But better than having non-adaptive tests.


4. "Differentiation will address most concerns."

- ▶ *IF* differentiation of instruction, curricula, and assessment by ability occurs ...
- ▶ Not much evidence differentiation is widespread.
- ▶ Schools are designed in a way that makes differentiation difficult.


5. “Increased rigor is bound to work out well for gifted students.”

- ▶ Related to #1.
- ▶ We did ~~ask for~~ demand it.
- ▶ But without accountability, we have no reason to believe this is true.
 - ▶ Some states arguably had more rigorous standards pre-CCSS, and there's little evidence gifted students in those states thrived.

Big Take-Aways



- ▶ The danger of CCSS to gifted education, like many “reforms” before them, is real.
 - ▶ Some developers are not friends of grouping, differentiation, etc.
- ▶ However, the arguments used against advanced education are weak.
- ▶ Educators of the gifted tend to be skilled in areas that are needed to make CCSS work: Differentiation, curriculum design, integrating range of domains, etc.
- ▶ Accountability is the key.

- 
- ▶ The Core *is* a clearly articulated set of grade-level standards in certain content areas that may provide some curricular consistency across district and state lines and can serve as a foundation for a comprehensive set of rigorous curricula.
 - ▶ The Core *is not* a clearly articulated set of differentiated content and instructional strategies designed to meet the needs of academically talented students.
 - ▶ By encouraging our educational leaders and policymakers to address the Core's limitations, we can realize the potential benefits for our high-ability children.

Contact Information



Jonathan Plucker

Raymond Neag Endowed Professor of Education

University of Connecticut

Twitter: @JonathanPlucker

jonathan.plucker@uconn.edu

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/JonathanPlucker>

<http://cepa.uconn.edu/mindthegap>

<http://jplucker.com>