



## **Response to 2020 CPAC Remarks by Education Secretary DeVos and Kellyanne Conway**

Remember Candidate Trump's promise to get rid of Common Core? No matter what administration officials say, this is one promise made - promise NOT delivered. Common Core is NOT gone. It remains in every state, in every public school, in every charter school, and sadly in many private and home school programs. Some states pretended to repeal Common Core only to reinstitute it under a different name. Florida may be the first state to make significant progress in a true repeal of Common Core, but that remains to be seen. Additionally, there is risk Florida could lose its Federal education funds if the U.S. Department of Education determines the new standards do not qualify as "college and career ready."

Common Core remains intact despite the mounting evidence that the standards have destroyed student achievement. Where progress was made pre-Common Core, student achievement is now in decline. For example, before Common Core in Secretary DeVos's home state of Michigan, 75% of third graders could read on grade level. Now, only 45% of Michigan third graders read on grade level. This is the case despite increased enrollment in charter schools in Michigan, which is the core "solution" to America's education problems as proposed by Secretary DeVos and Ms. Conway.

US Parents Involved in Education (USPIE) is fully supportive of the idea of putting parents back in charge of their children's education. The problem is "school choice" and "education freedom" proposals by the Federal Department of Education are actually "choice among Common Core programs" and "freedom to impose federal regulations on real education alternatives." USPIE also agrees completely with Secretary DeVos that the Federal government doesn't have all the solutions and the ideas she and Ms. Conway propose are bad ideas.

USPIE has developed viable solutions to return control of education to parents. The first step is to eliminate all Federal education programs and close the Federal Department of Education as outlined in the [USPIE Blueprint to Close USED](#). If the Trump administration supported this move rather than the mere \$5 billion they have allocated to "education freedom," they could allocate the entire \$64 billion Federal education budget. For 2020, this could be a tax credit program for parents of K-12 children who earn less than \$75,000 per year. The only regulation would be not to enroll their children in government schools and then each will receive \$4500 per child. Although this amount of money would not enable parents to choose schools for their children like the private schools many Congressmen and Secretary DeVos have chosen for their children, it would allow them to choose private or home schools that do not use Common Core or implement intrusive state assessments and data collection. This is real freedom in education.

As Ms. Conway says, “freedom beats free stuff.” However, USPIE contends freedom cannot be achieved through another government program. Freedom can only be achieved when government gets out of the way. If government gets out of the way, it matters not which party controls the White House or Congress.

President Trump has the opportunity to achieve what even the great President Ronald Reagan could only dream about. He could be the president who actually takes control of education away from the unions, away from big business, away from socialists, away from activists of either or any Party. He could restore the Constitutional version of education, by eliminating Federal intrusion and empowering parents in their local communities to direct the education of their children.