

Common Core public hearings scheduled
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The **Florida Department of Education** has scheduled three public hearings about mathematics and language-arts standards for public schools. **Gov. Rick Scott** directed the department to solicit public input about a plan to implement **Common Core State Standards**. Florida and 44 other states have adopted a set of measurements of what children should know and when. The new standards are scheduled to go into effect next school year.

The hearings will be held on consecutive days in Tampa, Davie and Tallahassee. Florida is in the third year of a four-year plan to transition from **Sunshine State Standards** to Common Core. However, opposition to the new standards has formed around the issue of local-control of schools, privacy concerns and a reliance on standardized tests.

When educators from across the nation gathered in Orlando in June to discuss Core standards, opponents demonstrated outside the hotel -- a spokeswoman for **Florida Parents Against Common Core** said the hotel had cancelled the group's reservations. Last week when lawmakers were in Tallahassee for committee meetings Common Core opponents rallied at the Capitol.

Last month, Scott directed the commissioner of education to hold three public hearings prior to November and to "identify opportunities to strengthen or risks for federal intrusion in Florida's standards."

"We look forward to the public's input, especially from teachers, students and their parents who are currently using these standards in their classrooms," said **Education Commissioner Pam Stewart** in a statement announcing the upcoming meetings.

The **Florida Stop Common Core Coalition** issued a statement Friday saying what it has heard about the hearings indicate they will produce only "cosmetic changes."

"The plan for these hearings and statements by the commissioner are reminiscent of the manipulative practices employed during the education accountability summit," said **Randy Osborne**, director of education for **Florida Eagle Forum** and **Heartland Research** and the chair of the **Marion County Republican Executive Committee**.

"These actions combined with the deceptive radio ads promoted by former Governor **Jeb Bush's Foundation for Excellence in Education**, a foundation funded by the corporate interests that stand to profit immensely from Common Core at the expense of our children, are an insult to Floridians and an assault on our liberties," Osborne said in a prepared statement.

The first of three public meetings will be held in Tampa on Oct. 15. The next day Stewart will host a public hearing at Broward College in Davie. And the final public hearing is scheduled for Tallahassee Community College in Tallahassee. All three meetings will begin at 5:00 p.m.

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