

## **Regarding Common Core *(and the associated duties of an elected official)***

There are times during the development of any organization or community when a sudden change in environment (such as the adoption of an externally developed policy) can have a dramatic and long term effect on the health and welfare of that community. During these times there are certain actions that must be taken by the leaders in the community in order to allow it to thrive. I believe these actions are:

1. Recognize these turning points early enough that they can be prepared for and (if possible) controlled,
2. Investigate them diligently and open-mindedly, always keeping the good of the community in mind,
3. Act decisively to lead down the path determined to be best to avoid the undesirable possibility of a future that is dictated by inaction.

I understand that the adoption of Common Core in Louisiana and Calcasieu Parish is one of those critical times for our area. Here are some of my personal feelings on this issue.

I philosophically disagree with what I consider to be excessive federal intrusion into our lives, particularly regarding the education of our children. I generally believe that policies created closer to home (at the local, parish, or state level) are less vulnerable to biased motivations and bureaucratic inefficiencies, and are more directly tailored to the desires and needs of our students, teachers, and parents. I also acknowledge and understand that this is a large and complex issue that will require extensive study by anyone intending to make an informed decision. **I commit to the people of my district** that I will invest the required time to understand as many of the complexities of this issue as possible, including the fact that as residents of Calcasieu Parish we have to work as part of the larger framework of the state of Louisiana, and as Louisianans, part of the larger framework of our great United States of America.

The duty of an elected official at any level is to represent the wishes and best interests first of his or her constituency, then of their community as a whole, putting aside personal feelings when necessary. I will rely heavily on input from educators, administrators, and parents as I try to discern the best course of action as we address this complex issue. **I commit to the people of my district** that when I am elected I will make myself accessible to them so that I might effectively understand the wishes and interests that I am to represent. I will give the parents and teachers in my district a voice on the board that is not afraid to stand up and speak their concerns.

**I believe there is a correct path through these times** for our community, but only with committed, competent, and courageous board members, willing to listen and work cooperatively with each other will we have the collective wisdom to discern that path and the collective courage to begin our journey down it.

I am Eric Tarver and I am running for Calcasieu Parish School Board District 8.