NCEA Statement on Common Core and Grant Received From the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

NCEA is committed to working alongside our membership in order to build upon and enhance the tradition of academic excellence, which is based on a rigorous curriculum infused with Catholic values as we prepare our students for this life and life everlasting.

Over the past several years, Catholic schools in over 100 dioceses have thoughtfully chosen how to address the Common Core State Standards. This number represents more than half the dioceses in the United States. The Common Core State Standards outline what students should learn and be able to do, but they are not the curriculum. Administrators and teachers have committed significant time and thought in determining how to adopt or adapt these standards as a base for developing rigorous curriculum rooted in Catholic values.

A curriculum includes what is taught, when it is taught, how it is taught and what materials are used. None of these items are included in any academic standards. For Catholic schools, all of these elements will continue to be determined by diocesan superintendents, principals and teachers working to meet the needs of their students.

As a Catholic, professional membership organization, we are committed to assisting our members in their mission through ongoing professional learning. In response to our members' needs to learn more about adapting the Common Core State Standards, NCEA has conducted workshops since 2011 throughout the United States on the integration of Catholic values into a rigorous academic curriculum designed to not simply achieve, but exceed these standards.

NCEA recently received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support professional learning opportunities for teachers and administrators in dioceses and schools that have chosen to implement the new math standards. NCEA will use these funds to defray the costs for teachers and administrators attending these summer workshops and to develop an online portal for Catholic teachers and administrators to engage in discussions as well as share mathematics lessons. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has no control over the content or processes used in conducting NCEA's educational conferences.

NCEA is committed to working with our educational professionals to reach the goal as stated in the Second Vatican Council's *Gravissimum Educationis*, Declaration on Christian Education:

> The influence of the Church in the field of education is shown in a special manner by the Catholic school. No less than other schools does the Catholic school pursue cultural goals and the human formation of youth. But its proper function is to create for the school community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, to help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism as they develop their own personalities, and finally to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith. So indeed the Catholic school, while it is open, as it must be, to the situation of the contemporary world, leads its students to promote efficaciously the good of the earthly city and also prepares them for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God, so that by leading an exemplary apostolic life they become, as it were, a saving leaven in the human community.

The National Catholic Educational Association is committed to working with our members to assure that Christ is at the center of the curriculum and pedagogy of every Catholic school. NCEA, the largest private professional education organization in the world, provides leadership, direction and service to its members through a variety of professional development activities.