

Continued from: *“Don’t Be Fooled – The Proposed “New” AL Math Standards Are the Same Old Common Core*

Unlike Alabama, Singapore and other top-performing nations, have students learn the standard algorithms beginning at the earliest elementary grades while they also have solid conceptual understanding and are excellent problem solvers.

When they do teach non-standard method/algorithms, it's only to introduce the topics to help students understand what they're doing; but quickly (in the same school year) students move to memorization of math facts and the standard algorithms for all four operations with multi-digit numbers. These other techniques are also NOT included in the actual standards describing what students must know and be able to do but in a separate section describing “instructional opportunities”. The Singapore grade 1 standard related to algorithms simply says “addition and subtraction using algorithms,” and the text about math facts says that these alternative approaches are for use “before committing the number facts to memory”. Notably, these alternative approaches are not used after grade 1 for addition/subtraction math facts up to 20 nor for the addition and subtraction algorithms. A similar approach is used when students are required to memorize the multiplication table (up to 5 in grade 2, and up to 9 in grade 3) and when they learn the multiplication and division algorithms (starting in grade 3).

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