

March 12, 2014

My name is Katrina Erni.

Hello Superintendent Enfield, School Board members, colleagues,

I was recently informed it was a possibility that students' standardized test scores could be tied to teacher evaluations due to House Bill (HB) 2800 and Senate Bill (SB) 5880. I find this upsetting, appalling, and absolutely inappropriate. It's why I'm here today. Tying students' standardized test scores to my evaluation, or any teacher's, when testing takes away so much of our instructional time is simply not ok. On top of that, these tests don't take into account student attendance, behaviors, test anxiety, parent involvement or language. These are things that are not in my control. INSTRUCTION is.

I work at Hilltop Elementary and I teach 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Dual Language on the English side. At third grade, students in this program are fully immersed in their bilingual, bi-literate education. They are receiving literacy instruction in both languages and are assessed in both languages in literacy. It is my job and joy to instruct in math and literacy, to work with my students and see them grow throughout the year.

I understand we need to be held accountable for our jobs. For TEACHING our students. I'm not opposed to assessments when it informs my instruction. I'm starting to feel like I'm not so much teaching as I am just assessing. My students take the standard tests the state and district has: MAPS, RBA, MBA, and Smarter Balanced (formerly MSP). These tests result in a minimum of 24 hours instructional loss for the year. For these tests alone. For my students this is the first time they've taken a high stakes test. For many of them it's also the first time they've taken a reading test in English. For some...they cry during these tests wanting to do their best, but not yet having the skills to show it.

These tests do not help drive my instruction. They do not help me TEACH. The MAPS, RBA and MBA tests are given before my students have been taught the curriculum they're tested on. There's also been no professional development on how to interpret the scores once we have access to them in my 6 years here. The Smarter Balanced test occurs at the end of the year could take as many as 4-6 days this year and I won't know any scores for this year. Where is the data that shows who is using this test data and how it drives their instruction? Where is the professional development to help train current and new staff?

We also administer the LAS for all students and the WELPA for our ELL students.

This year, I share 49 students with my teaching partner. Half of our students took the WELPA which caused a 3 day interruption in our schedule and a 4 hour loss of instructional time across 2 content areas. This test assesses a non-native English speaking learner on their English Skills. We don't typically get scores for this test until the end of the year. This does not help drive my instruction. This is not TEACHING or LEARNING.

We are expected to assess all students in both English and the 2<sup>nd</sup> language of the DL program using the F&P or Fountas & Pinnell leveled reading tests. That means for myself alone, that's a minimum of 98 tests each grading period. This year, for the winter trimester, it took me 7 weeks to complete assessments. Due to the change of our literacy structure, this resulted in a loss of more than 18 hours of literacy time with my students. That means that for 7 weeks, due to this testing, I was unable to confer or have guided reading and strategy groups.

I'm now at a loss of at least 46 hours of instructional time with my students this year. This total does not include Fall F&P testing or all of the upcoming Spring tests listed here on this paper (show paper).

This number of hours does not include any informal tests I give or the expected end of unit/chapter tests. These tests and the F&P scores do help drive my instruction. They help me help my students push themselves and grow throughout the year. Help us teachers by

providing subs during F&P testing time (my testing can be completed in 2 days rather than 7 weeks) and removing these tests that don't help drive our instruction.

Let me spend my time teaching my students and helping them to grow as learners using assessments that inform my instruction. Not being evaluated on how well my students do on assessments that are not connected to our everyday learning.

Thank you.