

I have been an elementary educator for the past 15 years at South Street School in Danbury. The idea of standards that every state would follow in educating our students is a worthy one. We moved our two sons to Connecticut from New York in the middle of the school year a number of years ago we experienced some gaps between what was expected in both states.

As an educator, I know that teachers need time to become familiar with both the Common Core standards and the new teacher evaluation plan.

How can you evaluate someone before they fully understand and feel comfortable with the standards? In February I attended the Fairfield County Regional CEA meeting in Trumbull. It was organized at the request of our legislators who wanted to hear from teachers about the impact on teaching and learning of implementation of the CCSS at the same time as the new teacher evaluation plan. I was there along with 500 teachers from Fairfield County. We felt that it was so powerful to hear so many teachers from all different districts, with different economics, and all ranges of years of teaching. They spoke about how teaching and learning has been impacted this year by teachers needing to create too many assessments and collecting endless data to work toward multiple goals; essentially testing more than teaching.

I am in favor of Proposed Bill No. 5331 which calls for the creation of a subcommittee of classroom teachers to discuss and share their issues involving the teacher evaluation program. It would also reduce the number of formal evaluations per school year. Right now teachers are consumed with paper work and collection of data on our students. Every one of our professional opportunities this year have been about the new evaluation plan. Professional development days should be so much more enriching.

I am also in favor of the Proposed Bill No. 5078 calling for the delay in implementation of the Common Core Standards until a thorough examination can be done into how it should be implemented to best serve our students.

Please listen to teachers who are so close to the students. Give us the support we need and we will be able to best educate our Connecticut children. I do appreciate your time in reading the testimonials.

Sincerely,

Ellen G. Shea
South Street School
Danbury, CT