

Dear State Education Committee, Mr. Frey, Mr. Shaban, Ms. Lavielle, and Ms. Boucher

As you prepare for your public hearing on Common Core I, as a parent of 4 children in public education, I wanted to express my concerns regarding education reform implemented in the State of Connecticut, which mirrors what is taking place in the country.

- I am concerned that the entire process of adopting these reforms has been undertaken in a manner that removed all public input, and effectively removes a great deal of local control from schools, thus impacting my ability to direct my children's education. These standards were created without any input from CT education leaders then adopted by the State Board of Education and the Governor without any input from district education leaders throughout the state.

- I am concerned that the new Common Core State Standards in both Math and ELA are developmental inappropriate, and feel that both parents, teachers and child developmental specialist in our state should be given the opportunity to understand them fully, and provide feedback on how their use is impacting CT's children. All of this should of course have taken place PRIOR to districts being told they need to implement them but since it did not I strongly agree that the state should put the CCSS and the SBAC tests on hold until they can be fully vetted with proper public input.

- I am concerned that the Connecticut State Department of Education is using my children this year as unpaid test subjects in research to assure the validity, reliability and fairness of a product called the Smarter Balanced Assessment without my fully-informed consent (which I believe is required whenever using human subjects in research), and insinuating that it is legally required by state statute. Furthermore I am concerned that the CT State Department of Education supplied districts with instructions on how to essentially bully parents into the SBAC Field Test.

- I am concerned that when administering this SBAC Field Test, a research test, my children's personal data will be linked to a test that has not yet been proven to be valid, reliable or fair and no one can tell me what will be done with the data except that I will not have access to it.

I am concerned that the State of Connecticut has developed a P20 database called the "Preschool through 20 Workforce Information Network" which was funded through the federal government, under the ARRA. I understand this will hold personal data including educational records and assessment data, and other data collected and shared across various state agencies, on our children from pre-school through college. This is especially disconcerting because the federal law (FERPA) to protect their personally identifiable information has been changed to allow sharing with outside organizations of personal information on my children.

- I am concerned that my child's teacher will at some future point be evaluated in great part based on the result of an entirely new and untested type of assessment. And as research shows, it could be detrimental to both students and teachers to tie a teacher evaluation to a standardized test score, and this practice should be eliminated altogether.

As a parent, I am very frustrated because my input into my local school district has almost completely diminished. Teachers tell me they have to follow the new standards and test measures

because their administrators tell them to. Administrators and my local Board of Education members tell me they have to follow the new standards and test measures because it is the law and the State Department of Education has taken to control out of their hands. I strongly believe we must return to having autonomous and local control with regards to our school system. As a tax payer of Ridgefield, CT my tax dollars go to a school system that I no longer have any say in and my vote for local BOE members is basically a joke since there are so many state mandates that take control away from my elected officials. Parents and local taxpayers need to continue to direct the education of our children, and local schools should continue to reflect local community needs. I hope that you can work to make that happen.

Thank you for your time,

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