

## **DON'T FREEZE COMMON CORE, INSTEAD**

### **DELAY TEACHER EVALUATIONS AND PROVIDE ADEQUATE SUPPORT**

**No on 5078, Yes on 5331**

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Eve Zucker. I am a parent of two children in a Stamford public elementary school. We are new to the Connecticut school system, having moved here last April from California where my son spent three years in the public school system. He also spent a year in a state school in London, England. These different educational experiences have provided me with a sense of what is being taught and how that knowledge is delivered in very different settings.

The second part of my background, also relevant to my statements is that I hold a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics and I have taught classes at a number of universities and colleges including: The London School of Economics, UC Irvine, and the University of Wisconsin. This experience is important to what I have to say because it has provided me with an understanding of what is expected of students at the university level and I also know what experience, skills and knowledge students are currently coming in with from the US and other countries.

To sum up my position, I agree that the Core Curriculum is a necessary step to raising the standards in most of the US states and adding a necessary consistency across the nation that is lacking. However, I do not believe that it is fair that our teachers should be evaluated based on a curriculum they are unfamiliar with and have not received adequate training for. I would suggest that Connecticut follow California's lead in delaying teacher evaluations for a couple of years while at the same time limiting the evaluations to once a year. Another suggestion, also from California is to provide more funding for teacher training as well as for technology training and resources for teachers and the students. A third suggestion (not from California) would be to take into account the demographics of the student populations of the schools when evaluating teachers. It would not be fair to the teachers of underprivileged students to expect the same level of success with privileged students who benefit from the additional resources their parents can provide them. Perhaps one way to get around this that would not compromise the expectations for underprivileged students would be to include in the evaluations a required percentage increase in performance over time with a goal set of achieving certain benchmarks in a reasonable amount of time.

I believe it is key that teachers are supported and not stressed, and that they are not stifled by evaluations. On the other hand it is equally clear that our educational system needs to improve to give our children the best possibilities for the future. At present, too many students coming into college unprepared for the rigors of academics despite the high requirements for college admission. The Common Core seems to close some of the gap and therefore freezing the program even temporarily would delay students from Common Core benefits and leave them with the previous curriculum that was in place that found was found to be unclear and severely deficient according to a number of measures.