

Testimony of Merle Sprague

Education Committee Public Hearing

Regarding: SB 380 "AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE RESULTS ON THE MASTERY EXAMINATION FROM TEACHER EVALUATIONS".

I am writing in support of SB 380.

I am pleased that this bill ensures a decoupling of Mastery Examination, currently in the form of SBAC test results, from teacher evaluation formulas. I remain unconvinced that the SBAC tests have demonstrated through verified independent research that they provide any instructional value whatsoever. The repeated claims by the test developers, the federal government that paid millions for this test, and the CSDE that is tasked with implementing this assessment is not sufficient to justify the misuse of mastery examination results or the prohibitive expense to taxpayers of this flawed assessment.

I hope you see why it is important to disconnect flawed evaluative systems based on student test results on an unproven test from performance ratings of teachers who are working - often against challenging circumstances - to educate your children and grandchildren. Do not allow an effort to punish a minority of them to infect them all. Ask yourself, how you would like an unfair evaluative system to determine your job performance.

Since when do Americans simply accept the unsubstantiated claims of those who stand to profit and those tasked with implementation without independent verification by researchers who are not indebted to philanthropic benefactors?

The CSDE's stubborn compliance with this unproven, discriminatory, and unfair test demonstrates why voters across the country are losing or have lost trust with government agencies:

- since there are mountains of evidence that refute the validity, reliability, and other psychometric properties in its experimental design of SBAC,
- since there are many parents refusing (opting-out) to allow their children to take the SBAC test,
- since there are discredited reviews from highly-regarded groups, like the American Statistical Association, the National Research Council, and the National Academy of Education that agreed with Dr. Edward Haertel, the Stanford University professor, who in 2013 reported that "Teacher VAM [value-added models] scores should emphatically not be included as a substantial factor with a fixed weight in consequential teacher personnel decisions. The information they provide is simply not good enough to use in that way."

PLEASE SUPPORT SB 380 and decouple controversial SBAC test results from teacher evaluations.

Respectfully submitted,

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