

Jason Morris
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New London, CT 06320

RE: Public Testimony regarding SB 175

Dear Education Committee,

I write to you in clear opposition to SB 175.

I am a parent of three, homeowner, Navy veteran, a member of the New London Parent Advocates, and twice a candidate for the New London Board of Education. I have been doing education advocacy for 4 years now, attending nearly every Board meeting and most committee meetings, and reading research and working on parent/community engagement.

I have personally seen the physical and psychological effects that standardized testing is and has done to our students over the 15 years of its dark history. I found my daughter outside my bedroom with stomach pains and headaches from stress and anxiety caused by the test just two days into taking it. Teachers across the nation have reported students pulling their eyelashes out, wetting their pants, crying throughout, and just "clicking through" the test because it's so frustrating. This is not a method of assessment that benefits our children, it benefits the corporations that deliver it. The same corporations getting paid by the USDE to deliver "Trauma informed schools" training to our districts (Project Prevent), is the same corporation that delivers trauma in the form of the Smarter Balance Assessment, American Institutes for Research (AIR).

SB 175 will take failed and damaging policy from the federal level and enshrine it in CT law, even after ESSA got rid of it to allow states to find a better path. SB 175 will:

- Label districts with ratings (redlining)
- Strip MBR flexibility from top performing districts who have high opt out rates
- Enshrine No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver provisions into state statute right when we have the opportunity to explore performance assessment, project-based assessment, and student portfolio evaluations which are proven to be much more beneficial to student learning and the learning experience
- Grants the Commissioner the ability to decide who gets a High School diploma based on a test he or she chooses

These are the most egregious changes noted from the bill, this is not the direction CT should be going, one where we are allowing corporate funded campaigns to submit such proposed legislation and corporate funded non-profits to lobby for its passage. This bill is really not for the kids, it's for the shareholders and campaign donors. Which are you siding with?