

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS  
FROM INDEX CARDS DISTRIBUTED AND HANDED IN  
2015 Community Summit on Student Assessments

Tues, June 2, 2015

6:00 – 8:00 pm

West High School

- Data from year end tests can't be used to help students, but it is used to harm teachers.
- The new type of assessments, like the MIST and TNready are not developmentally appropriate (3-5 grade group).
- Testing causes teachers to lose a tremendous amount of instructional time.
- Too many STAR tests – only need one or two to screen. Teachers should have the choice of how many assessments are needed to help with instruction.
- Students are frustrated because they are expected to do tasks that are not developmentally appropriate (3-5 grade group). The bottom line is that we are not doing what is right for our children. They have been reduced to numbers.
- Tests do not measure the true ability of the students
- Too much pressure placed on kids by teachers
- Computer skills needed to do well on tests are beyond the level of most third graders
- Timed tests are inappropriate for most young children
- A 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher in our group indicated that testing took up 25 hours of class time. Consider how many hours of study at home that involves, on top of daily school work. Consider that most of the students in Knox County schools have either one parent (single) that works, or both parents work. It isn't just spreading the kids too thin to do this many tests – it's extremely stressful for both the kids AND the parents.
- Concerns with appropriateness of tests (3-5 grade group):
  - Skills and access to computers
  - Matching tests to curriculum
  - Matching tests to developmental level and language skills (ELL)
  - Testing too early in the semester
  - Inappropriate tests lead to students feeling helpless and lead to killing student motivation
- Standardized tests should not count as part of a student's grade
- Tests should not be used to evaluate teachers
- Respective, non-punitive opt-out policy
- Don't know the curve; Don't know the stakes; Don't know who made the test; Don't use the test to help my student. Tests – physical science – are used to evaluate students and teachers even if they aren't taking or teaching that class
- This session format was not adequate to address the complexity of these issues. There is a LOT of frustration, anger, and things that just plain need to be changed.
- I feel that our concerns are not heard, used, considered

- Knox County should set an example for the State of Tennessee and refuse all high-stakes testing. Stop using tests for grades and evaluations.
- Problem: High stakes. No more tying assessment scores to teachers' evaluations and students' grades. No more teaching to the test.
- ELL: The fear for bringing children into this system is high due to amount of teacher tests and required assessments.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade appears to be a majority of the assessments (2/3). Can you please re-address this with the State of Tennessee and Board of Education?
- The tests are not seen by parents, students or teachers – so what's the point? How much are we spending? Predicted scores – what is that? Why is it necessary?

#### QUESTIONS:

- What do we give up to give tests? This list doesn't have the stakes. Who developed them? Who makes them?
- Can TCAPS have modifications? For example, if a child has a learning disability? Can the number of questions be reduced for a special ed child?
- Can the Knox County required assessments be altered to incorporate extra-curricular activity participation into the final scoring calculation?
- What are the state laws/requirements around uninterrupted instructional time for elementary students?
- Is the assessment tail wagging the inclusion dog?
- If a student with a pervasive disability is being assessed on TCAP (TNReady) achievement, should they NOT receive full core curriculum instruction (Gen ed or Resource)?
- Who creates the test? Who reviews/edits it?
- How many run-through/practice tests/technology runs go with each test?
- How many of these tests are done multiple times per year? Which? How many times?
- There is a concern with Common Core not aligning 100% with tests. How does a mere rebranding address this?
- Who gets the data? When? What is the benefit for each affected party (student, teacher, downtown, testing company)?
- What are correlations of different assessments? Publish correlations of various assessments.