

Karen Beltran, Parent, Yonkers Council of PTAs

"In 2013, I had the opportunity to address Commissioner King at a public hearing in Porchester, NY. The same concerns are true today. In Yonkers there is a severe lack of adequate funding for Yonkers necessary to properly implement the common core curriculum. We again stress the need to look at districts such as Yonkers where resources are limited for everything not just academic support. Severe cuts to arts, music and PE noted then are same or worse. Only half-day pre-k has returned to full-time and only because of a funding from a federal grant due to expire in 3 more years. We are expected to comply with same mandates as wealthier districts but not the funding to implement.

How can a curriculum be successful without the supportive tools?

While understating value of testing for accountability purposes and to measure general academic achievement and to improve academic achievement in particularly in high needs districts, high stake testing and linking to educator evaluations is not appropriate. Equally much consideration should be given to the amount of testing and types of testing children are subjected to.

Instead let's focus on ensuring that students, teachers and parents have the support and tools they need especially at the receivership schools, of which we have 8 and more on the way. How are more unfunded mandates help to better these schools?

A wholesome approach is needed not one focused on testing and evaluations without taking into account lack of resources like in Yonkers, NY."