

Matthew Butler, Teacher

"I believe in good change that has been researched well and implemented properly. As a 6th grade math teacher, I have been disappointed in the direction New York State has taken in math education. The initial idea presented was that the curriculum was "too wide and not deep enough". The part about depth was correct. We do need to be teaching our students to understand mathematical concepts at a deeper level. Unfortunately, the "wide" has not narrowed. There is too much curriculum for my 6th graders to master at the pace set forth by the state. The school year is shortened by the senseless and time-consuming math assessments in April. By March, many of us are simply covering material so our students don't feel completely lost on these exams. Covering is not teaching when it comes to math. Why are we sacrificing true learning for the sake of an April deadline? On the state's own web site we are told that the last module which will be assessed should actually be finished after the assessment is given. It has been this way ever since the new standards and modules have been presented. We need to rethink assessment from the very beginning. End-of-year assessments would be more valid in showing what a student has learned that year. Please rethink what measures show true learning. The parents, students, and teachers of New York State have made it abundantly clear: We do not like what you are doing. Listen and fix it!"