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I am not opposed to high standards, as long as the questions and readability of the tests are appropriate for each grade level. A major concern of mine is when the tests are given. It is unfair for the State Education Department to expect teachers to teach 10 months of curriculum in 8 months to prepare for a state test. Teachers are doubling up on math lessons and pushing students through ELA reading and writing practices in order to get students ready. This creates a lot of anxiety for teachers and students. These tests should be given near the end of June, so that teachers have a full year to get through the curriculum. Tests could be given during regents week and teachers could be pulled to grade them.

ELA ;

One issue I have is that most of the reading passages for the NYS ELA tests are above a students' grade level. For example, students in 4th grade should not be given passages and questions that are at an 8th grade level and so on.

The length of the test is another concern. Personally, 6 reading passages with appropriate multiple choice and written response questions should give more than enough information about a students ability to comprehend grade level material. Usually there are about 7 to 8.

Math:

While I feel the standards are appropriate, the questions and readability need to be appropriate for each grade level. For example, students in 4th grade should not be tested on adding fractions with unlike denominators or circumference.

Another issue I have is the length and amount of work required for some questions in the multiple choice section of the test. Questions that involve more than 1 step should be extended response questions, so that children have a chance of getting partial credit.

APPR:

It is unfair to use a majority of a teacher's evaluation score from one test. Several factors affect a students learning ability such as environment, emotional issues, lack of parental involvement, health issues etc. The opt out movement has affected teachers scores. If a teacher has less than half of her class taking the test, it is unfair to evaluate her based on the test because of the lack of scores.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns. I truly hope that more appropriate tests and how they are used will improve.