



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

Senator Kenneth P. LaValle Statement Re: Common Core Curriculum and Testing

KENNETH P. LAVALLE August 16, 2013

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This past Spring I began hearing from the parents of elementary school students about perceived problems with New York State's implementation of the new Common Core Curriculum and associated testing. I met with those parents, listened to their concerns, and also met with representatives of the State's Education Department. I agree that the implementation of the Common Core could have been better handled in terms of sequence and we need to make sure that the Board of Regents and State Education Commissioner, going forward, make certain that the curriculum resources are in place.

While the legislature had no role in the adoption of Common Core and the new testing standards, I as your State Senator have introduced legislation to provide oversight and insure that the tests are fair, unbiased, grade level appropriate and administered properly. My bill requires disclosure of test questions and answers so that parents, teachers and students can have an opportunity to review test questions to better understand and the reason behind a particular class or child's test scores.

The bill also requires the Commissioner of the State Education Department to report, annually to the Legislature about: the effectiveness of Common Core state tests in enhancing student learning and performance; the fairness and appropriateness of test items for each grade level, including the percentage of test items found to be above grade level; the correlation between test scores and grade point averages of test subjects taking common core state tests; a statistical analysis of student performance based on socioeconomic, gender, race and ethnicity and regional factors; the effectiveness of the test agency as the test development vendor; factors to be considered in determining whether to continue with the current test agency or other vendor as a test agency or utilize Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests in 2015.

I am confident our school districts, teachers and parents will rise to meet the challenges of this new reality and work together to do what is in the best interest for our students.