

My name is Lisa Eells and I am an elementary principal working for Bloomfield Public Schools where our motto is, "Raising the Bar is Taking us Far." That "Bar" is the "Bar" that measures student achievement performance on state tests. Bloomfield's strong multiple year trajectory toward success is due to teams of teachers and administrators working side by side while setting a vision and goals, tracking, not only the yearly state test data, but also data all year long, in smaller, weekly and monthly increments - watching carefully for growth and marking gaps to fill - in ways that all relate to the state test data.

For Bloomfield to make the extraordinary growth it has made (High School Graduation Rate from 74% in 2011 to 90% in 2014, increased success with SAT Scores, and higher scores on the 2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment in English Language Arts than the state average), teachers and administrators needed metrics in reading, math, and science that indicated areas of success as well as areas of concern. It needed metrics that compared us to the state average and to the highest achieving districts in order to provide feedback to ourselves about our teaching practices and allow us to work in tandem to problem solve and creatively approach the education of our students in a more refined manner.

The current educator evaluation system (including administrator evaluation since we are also evaluated using the same measures) allows districts, like Bloomfield, to work together to create a meaningful teacher evaluation process that focuses on student achievement through enhanced adult practices. It allows teachers and administrators to fully collaborate to raise test scores with all staff rowing in the same direction. Especially in districts where low socioeconomic status exists, the state test data brings a standard that allows for no excuses regarding student achievement outcomes and for high quality teachers to be maintained.

Removing state test data from the teacher and administrator evaluation system will disband the common purpose and concentration that teachers and administrators have gained in collaborating to increase their own performance and accountability together for stronger student achievement results.

Keeping state test data, along with multiple measures of teacher and administrator performance, as part of the evaluation process focuses us all on a mutual purpose across the state that will not hide the results from visibility and joint responsibility that benefits the children in our state.

Thank you for your time to hear a principal's viewpoint.