

BIG SIX COALITION PRESS CONFERENCE ON S.B. 380
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Good morning. My name is Dr. RoseAnne O'Brien Vojtek and this is my 17th year as the principal of Ivy Drive Elementary School in Bristol.

I am here today because education matters. The competence of our teachers and the quality of instruction in the classroom matters.

For our students to be successful, teaching must change. It is no longer feasible or acceptable to think that anyone can walk into a classroom and be a teacher. It does take rocket science to propel students into an unforeseeable future in which many of the jobs they might expect to have will not exist because of robotics and other technological advances. We must build the capacity to redesign our schools and meet the ever-changing conditions and needs of our students.

The only way educators will continue to improve the art and science of pedagogy will be through a positive and effect evaluation system that provides quality feedback; supports individual and collective professional development; aligns with state and local standards; and is driven by the results of student achievement.

We spend countless hours and millions of dollars each year on professional development, training, and support. Yet, how do we know that it is making a difference?

We use data. We need and must use multiple qualitative and quantative measures, including anecdotal, objective, formative, and summative assessments. We must have metrics that provide longitudinal individual student growth data and use this information to set high-level personalized student learning goals.

We use this information to establish targeted professional learning goals that build the capacity, complexity, confidence, and growth of educators as well as to determine our school and district improvement plans. We use this data to hold ourselves and each other accountable for achieving a high-level of performance.

To continue to improve the quality of education for all students and hone our own professional craft, schools must have access to a variety of educational metrics that are fair, reliable, and valid. As part of a continuous school improvement effort, educators, and yes, our students and their parents, must have explicit knowledge and understanding of individual student targeted growth and achievement results.

In a positive and proactive way we must continue to analyze and use multiple metric results to study, plan, implement, evaluate, refine and celebrate student achievement and the effectiveness of our own professional growth. This information empowers educators to take ownership and responsibility for our own learning and student achievement.

This is the catalyst that will help Connecticut close our achievement gap.

Thank you.