



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senator Ken LaValle Renews Push For Common Core "Truth In Testing" Legislation

KENNETH P. LAVALLE April 25, 2014

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April 21, 2014 – Senator Ken LaValle is renewing his push for a “Truth In Testing” legislation to increase disclosure of Common Core testing. The central part of Senator LaValle’s bill (S5540) is to require the actual test questions and answers be made available to parents, students and teachers after the exams are scored. “Truth in Testing” also provides for an appeals process for parents who believe their child received an inaccurate score. In addition, the bill would require an independent audit to review and evaluate the Common Core program.

Senator LaValle said, “After many months of a debate about Common Core Curriculum and high-stakes testing, it’s time to pass my Truth in Testing” legislation. Testing at all levels has been a concern of mine since I introduced and passed into law testing in conjunction with the Standard Aptitude Tests (SATs). The issues concerning high-stakes testing, it’s impact on our children and ultimately, on how to fairly evaluate teachers, are paramount for a proper education. Parents have a right to know their children are being tested in a fair and accurate way.”

“Truth in Testing” is meant to ensure that the mandated tests are fair, unbiased, grade-level appropriate and administered properly. The release of exam information would also provide an opportunity to review questions and answers towards an understanding of student’s test scores. The first year the bill becomes law fifty percent of the Common Core questions must be made publicly available 30 days after of testing. The second year would require full disclosure of the information on the State Department of Education’s website. Questions asked purely for future use, and not included in the scoring, would be excluded from the measure.

Senator LaValle’s legislation also would require the Commissioner of Education to annually report to the Governor and the Legislature concerning:

- 1) the effectiveness of common core state tests in enhancing student learning and performance;
- 2) the fairness and appropriateness of test items for each grade level, including the percentage of test items found to be above grade level;
- 3) the correlation between test scores and grade point averages of test subjects taking common core state tests;
- 4) a statistical analysis of student performance based on socioeconomic, gender, race and ethnicity and regional factors;
- 5) the effectiveness of the test agency as the test development vendor;

6) 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.

Finally, the bill would require the State Education Department to survey school administrators and teachers on a variety of issues surrounding common core testing. With so much importance placed on state mandated exams and with a new curriculum being used as a basis for such exams, it is imperative to ensure that the tests are fair, appropriate for each grade and unbiased.