

Members of the School Committee:

My comments are specifically in regard to the Comprehensive Assessment Policy. I am not going to spend my time reiterating the many reasons I've previously outlined to explain this policy in its current form is bad for our district. I do want to take this time to address one particular aspect of this conversation, and that is the school rating system employed by RIDE. It has been argued to me that we need to require kids to take state assessments because our schools' commended status depends in part on participation in these exams.

Last week I provided you all a copy of the RIDE policy on school rating, and I have a copy here should anyone like to see it. The rating system proposed by RIDE is outlined on Slide 7. You'll note that school rating depends, almost exclusively, on performance and participation on the state assessments in Math and ELA. These two tests alone determine our schools' rating status. Let me say that again – *our schools' rating depends almost entirely on how our children perform on state assessments*. This is bad policy from RIDE.

One thing we teach children at a very young age is that two wrongs do not make a right. Passing a local policy to conform to a bad state policy is just wrong. By passing this policy as it exists, we are tacitly agreeing to let our schools be judged based on these two tests. Our administrators deserve more, our teachers deserve more, and most importantly, our students deserve more than to have our schools be rated by two tests.

You will hear conversation that this rating system is subject to change. That is true. It is also true that testing in our state is in flux. I sent you all a link to a recording of a hearing on this issue at the state house. The legislature is clear – they intend to rid our state of PARCC and to specifically *not* require our kids to participate in state assessments.

Why should our district require participation in state tests when testing and rating systems are so clearly in flux? While very smart people are working

hard to figure out what's best, real kids and real families in real time are struggling with these state level fluctuations. It simply doesn't make sense to require kids to participate at this point.

I respect that you all are working to find the right solution. Vote this policy down tonight and revise it to remove the word 'required' in the third paragraph of the policy statement. Direct district leadership to speak out publicly about the punitive nature of RIDE's rating system. Your district looks to you to represent us and rather than passing one bad policy to conform to another, I ask you to be publicly vocal with your dissatisfaction with RIDE's rating system to advocate on the district's behalf.

I look forward to hearing your discussion tonight on this issue. I was at the hearing at the state house on June 11 and can speak about what happened there. I am also happy to reiterate many of my prior points on the policy and why it should not be passed if you have any questions.

Thank you