

**ESEA FLEXIBILITY
THIRTY-ONE SURVEY RESULTS – REPORTED AS WRITTEN**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM

October 28, 2011

Please circle the title that most closely describes your role in the community:

Teacher - 8	Teachers' Representative - 8	Parent - 5	Student - 1
Community Leader - 2	Business Owner/Employer - 4	Other - 7	

Discussion Topic #1: College, Career, and Citizen Readiness

Regarding the transition from the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) to the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which are the college and career readiness standards adopted by Oklahoma:

1. How familiar are you with the new Common Core State Standards?

- a. Very familiar - 7
- b. Generally familiar - 17
- c. Generally unfamiliar - 6
- d. Very unfamiliar - 1

2. How will transitioning from PASS to the new Common Core State Standards impact the preparation of Oklahoma's high school graduates for post-secondary education, work force training, or immediate employment?

- a. Improve the preparation of high school graduates - 20
- b. No impact on the preparation of high school graduates - 3
- c. Weaken the preparation of high school graduates - 2

Please give a brief explanation:

- *Teach or application & understanding*
- *Use growth models*
- *It is far more standardized and promotes didactic instruction which does not expand or increase the depth of instruction, hindering the potential of students.*
- *It will develop critical thinking skills, allowing the child to become & work independent(ly).*
- *It will improve the prep of HS graduates if they have mastered the baseline of PASS, for example simply reading words.*
- *I believe the transition will impact the assessments more than the graduates.*
- *Students are very transit these days. So, when a student moves in he/she will be where they belong. This will stop the GAPS in education.*
- *Comparing students across a national level to their past progress seems to put all students on a level playing field and the likelihood of success more attainable. Test methods will encourage better critical thinking skills.*
- *Change causes a bit of chaos.*
- *Reduce actual career training (career tech, for example). We aren't preparing enough skilled workers now and this could mean we prepare even fewer.*
- *We need to move away from black and white multiple choice answers and develop tests that analyze thinking processes where students can explain their answers.*
- *Anything we can do to improve our students' readiness for the world of work will improve students and our communities at large.*
- *Gives more critical thinking skills. I worry that we will lose arts and foreign language.*

- *Yet to be determined/as long as a one size fits all is mandated, some students will be doomed to fail.*
- *CCSS is more application then rote memory.*
- *Students will apply what they have learned to other situations/tests.*
- *Academics must be incorporated into all courses not just stand-alone.*
- *We won't know until we implement.*

3. As we revise our English Learner Proficiency (ELP) standards to correspond to the new Common Core State Standards, which 2 or 3 of the following strategies do you think would best assist English Learners to access challenging curriculum?

- Home visits to reinforce home-to-school connection - 4
- Literacy and language-specific technology - 22
- Literacy services/programs for parents of English Learners - 17
- Project-based learning strategies - 9
- School-based data reviews specific to English Learners' achievement results and progress toward higher standards - 12
- Other suggestions:
 - *Bi-lingual Instruction*
 - *We need to report progress based on a growth model*
 - *The current reporting system is not achievable, therefore it is not smart.*
 - *Programs for parents with children 0-5, not yet in school develops child language and improves parenting.*
 - *Fostering bilingual school culture (i.e., language classes for teachers & staff).*
 - *Teaching teachers how to work with ELLs when they don't speak the children's language(s) and have few resources. Think rural schools.*
 - *Newcomers Programs – Stillwater*
 - *Regular school events for English Learners' families only. Show that the school does care. Maybe once a year.*
 - *Extended time periods even night school.*
 - *Emersion strategies rather than continuing to handicap the ELL students by enabling their language limitations.*
 - *To teach them English you need to use the TPRS method. Blainraytptrs.com - Faster – more efficient to learn English. Submersion takes only about three months.*
 - *PD for classroom teachers.*
 - *Training for educators in best practices for ELL students.*
 - *Professional Development for teachers and best practices for teaching ELP.*

4. Which 2 or 3 of the following strategies do you think would best assist students with disabilities and low-achieving students to access challenging curriculum?

- One-on-one or small group tutoring - 21
- Technology-based instructional practices - 15
- Literacy strategies - 11
- Project-based learning strategies - 8
- Classes for parents including at-home strategies to support classroom activities - 9
- School-based data reviews specific to achievement results and progress toward higher standards for students with disabilities and low-achieving students - 10
- Other suggestions:
 - *Growth measures*

- *For extremely low students, instead of focusing on academics, the focus needs to be work skills/life skills.*
- *Special education. Too few schools still do that.*
- *All students with disabilities should be allowed to have a standardized portfolio that supports growth and reaches the goals as written on IEP.*
- *Early childhood education is a key to helping students.*
- *Abolishing pre-determined percentages of students tested with modified exams to avoid confusion these limits cause on IEP teams responsible for writing plans appropriate for student needs.*
- *PD for classroom teachers.*
- *Technology-based instructional practices depends on the quality of the program and its implementation.*
- *Teacher training*
- *More Special Ed teachers in the schools*
- *Fewer students per educator*
- *Professional Development for classroom teachers in modifications to help these students.*

5. In your community, how would you like to see the teachers and administrators in the school collaborate with businesses and community leaders on the needs of high school graduates?

Please share 2 or 3 suggestions.

- *Major community employers communicate skills needed*
- *I would like for community support to start at birth, not just high school*
- *Discussion opportunities*
- *Requirements for businesses /community leaders to be in schools and requirements for teachers/administrators to be involved with them.*
- *Mentoring programs or leadership programs*
- *Community Advisory Boards*
- *Incentives for school personnel to be involved in community organizations*
- *Serve on community groups – chamber business and education committee*
- *Mentors from community for students - Internship/apprentice positions for students*
- *Job fair explaining employment needs – college, graduation, attendance*
- *Schools need feedback on what students do after graduating. (or after leaving without being allowed to graduate even though they made good grades)*
- *Business leaders get involved with Success by Six and become mentors in the schools. Teachers and administrators need to get involved in community groups.*
- *Clear and loud expectations set by business*
- *Work on public policy on state level to raise standards*
- *Career Fairs where businesses talk to students about their expectations.*
- *Field Trips to Colleges and Vo-Tech facilities.*
- *Keep communication lines open*
- *Adopt after school programs to help out with homework, course on ACT.*
- *Job shadowing opportunities*
- *Partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce*
- *Career Tech collaboration*
- *First, administration and teachers need to learn to collaborate professionally together, build trust and a common message, treating each stakeholder with respect as professionals.*

- *At a school I used to be at, they worked with a bank in town and students interested in banking experienced working there several times within the school year.*
- *Get parents involved*
- *Shadowing jobs/businesses for kids to have real-life experience.*
Presentations/collaborations with community to focus on children at a younger age.
- *Work more closely together.*
- *Shadow training in fields of interest, (shadow in younger ages), guest speakers, businesses need to volunteer in school day activities.*
- *What are the necessary outcomes – business must tell us.*
- *Community forums – use of social networking possibly.*
- *Focus groups with educators and community leaders.*
- *Business leaders need to spend time in schools.*
- *Partner with schools to give students an opportunity to “try out” different careers and/or have a mentor from the area of their interest. Specifically struggling students to give them more motivation to succeed in school.*

Discussion Topic #2: Areas of School Accountability

Regarding the State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support System:

6. As we design a new accountability system, which 2 or 3 of the following elements would best indicate that a student has mastered the new Common Core State Standards?

- Passing state tests in language arts and mathematics - 13
- Graduating from high school - 14
- Scoring high on college entrance exams like the ACT and SAT - 11
- Earning college credit while in high school through AP exams or concurrent enrollment - 4
- Completing a career preparation program - 17
- Being accepted into a college, university, or career-training program without remediation - 9
- Qualifying to enlist in the United States Armed Forces - 1
- Other suggestions:

- *Please design individual growth comparisons*
- *Growth, continuous growth on state tests, not just passing*
- *A progress model based on individual students*
- *Portfolios*
- *Showing marked growth in academic areas*
- *Examine growth of students from year to year AND most importantly, regular assessments throughout the year collectively.*
- *All students = graduating from high school; Upper level students = scoring high on ACT & SAT; Low level students = Completing a career prep program*
- *All of these, of course. I marked the 3 that are usually left behind. I would add that kids would do better if we quit accepting “D” work. Employers don’t.*
- *Students being able to take a problem/question, research it, form some intellectual thought on their own, and then formulate a response. On a consistent basis – not just a one-shot/arbitrary topic.*
- *Emphasis on student growth for low achievers, exit exams for high achievers, and return to parent/student choice about pursuing college-bound or non-college-bound course work – requires ending summative measures on schools whose parents select non-college outcomes.*

- *Successfully completing a college/career-prep program.*
- *In order to realistically see indicators of mastery of subject area, you need to show where students begin.*

7. How familiar are you with the state's newly adopted A-F School Grading System?

- Very familiar - 4
- Generally familiar - 18
- Generally unfamiliar - 6
- Very unfamiliar - 3

8. What are the 2 or 3 most important criteria to which every school should be held accountable in measuring progress?

- Student achievement scores on state tests in:
 - Reading - 10 Math - 10 Science - 4 Social Studies - 3 Writing - 9
- Student growth (progress) on state tests - 22
- Student achievement on other assessments like the ACT, SAT, and AP exams - 7
- Attendance - 11
- Graduation rate/dropout rate - 15
- Advanced courses completed by students - 4
- Student behavior - 5
- Teacher effectiveness - 13
- Other suggestions:

- *More immediate feedback from a variety of forms of assessment*
- *Knowledge needed in true assessment*
- *Students' home environment*
- *Student growth (progress) in portfolio and on assessments*
- *There is only so much the school district can do. At some point the school district should not be penalized because of parenting.*
- *The state should look at how graduation rate/dropout rate is figured for each school. If a student drops out but returns and graduates then that student should not be labeled dropout.*
- *Parent survey*
- *High stakes testing should not be used to measure teacher effectiveness.*
- *Student success/failure on end of process assessments.*
- *Periodic testing throughout the year to show progress.*
- *Classroom performance*
- *I don't think this A through F will be a true indicator of the effectiveness of a school.*

9. What do you believe are the indicators that a school is doing well or showing improvement?

Please share 2 or 3 suggestions.

- *Growth models*
- *School culture inventories*
- *Community opinion*
- *Students are taking courses aimed at preparing them for college and career*
- *Student have been on a path for graduation*
- *Parents are involved in educational plan of their students*
- *School climate community support visible @ the school*

- *Growth on a teacher, student, and parent level*
- *Progress over time for students and teachers.*
- *Students are showing growth in core subjects.*
- *Should be scored independently school year to school year. Not each school scored accordingly how others are doing.*
- *Consistent and regular attendance*
- *Students are taking advantage of AP classes, earning college-credits, or are attending Vo-Tech while enrolled in public schools.*
- *Student attitude and behavior towards education.*
- *The ways in which formulae are applied to data are critical and should not be taken lightly. A review of non-NCLB AYP-focused growth models would be helpful. VAMs are so dependent on the variables entered into the equations that they should be carefully reviewed before use.*
- *Numbers of students in remediation*
- *Improvement year to year (Growth models)*
- *SES vs. Achievement (take into account demographics)*
- *Success in College/work - # needing remediation, employment status, enrollment in higher ed.*
- *The amount of growth they show*
- *Take attendance out of AYP figures.*
- *Chart progress of students*
- *Reconfigure dropout rate*
- *Critical thinking/problem solving skills*
- *Well-rounded curriculum that includes fine arts, health and foreign language*
- *Integration of technology to create 21st century learners.*
- *Evidence that students have been afforded opportunities to master college-readiness curriculum (students accepted into colleges).*
- *Student growth in core area knowledge*
- *Evidence that school has provided opportunities who opt for non-college-bound curriculum.*
- *Not all kids are good test takers. Progress can be shown through various methods. If tests are given throughout the year and not just at the end to show progress then a school is showing improvement. Goals should be set as to how far they should have progressed at a particular point. If each target has been met, then at the end of the year the child should be ready for the next grade.*
- *Assessments that show growth (pre and post-tests) and inform instruction.*
- *Student growth climate.*
- *Student growth*
- *ACT scores*
- *School environment*
- *Student growth*
- *School climate*
- *Utilization of value-added score – don't assess on a single score. Growth metrics.*
- *Growth on student assessments*
- *Combination of many things – portions of items on #8. Pre- Post-test information, growth school climate/culture indicators.*
- *Growth of student achievement.*

Discussion Topic #3: Recognitions for Excellent Schools

Regarding the State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support System:

10. Which 2 or 3 of the following strategies would be ways you would like to see Reward Schools recognized for their progress and achievement?

- Financial rewards to the school - 18
- Financial rewards to the teachers - 15
- Public recognition at statewide events or by state officials - 15
- Public recognition at local events or by local officials, businesses, and organizations - 18
- Grant opportunities to collaborate with and mentor lower-performing schools - 12
- Other suggestions:

- *Media Acknowledgement*
- *Grants in the form of financial aid for teachers and their children.*
- *Reward students*
- *The last one listed is a good idea.*
- *Maybe computers, books, guest speakers, etc.*
- *Financial rewards to the principals and counselors*
- *Parent surveys should be a part of the reward system. At least 75% should complete.*
- *Professional development = paying for subs*
- *Any reward should foster collaboration not competition*
- *Stipends for summer professional development.*
- *Increase flexibility to redesign school day, class schedule.*
- *Financial donation to the community.*
- *Some type of award for students to celebrate their hard work.*
- *Financial rewards to schools – currently unfair and divisive unless demographics are equalized in the new system.*
- *Ask the teachers what they would like.*

11. What are some powerful incentives that can have the greatest impact on a school's performance? Please share 2 or 3 suggestions.

- *Public recognition by professional pay for educators*
- *Have a system that takes into account number of students tested advanced – instead of lumping advanced with proficient students.*
- *Reward schools that encourage AP courses for students to take.*
- *Reward to children & Parents will attract more parent support*
- *Grants for college for teachers' kids*
- *Giving rewards that can be used in the classroom.*
- *Financial rewards on all levels – Teachers & parents; If your child does improve and is able to go on to college, don't make it a struggle to pay for it.*
- *Donated technologies & materials (maybe a good avenue for business partnerships)*
- *Students need immediate feedback and they need a vision and to know teachers' vision for them. Having the support of the community for rewards and recognition would be helpful.*
- *Students receiving rewards. They need an incentive to do better.*
- *Additional funding for districts.*
- *Student success is a powerful incentive.*
- *Include students in the public recognition or awards – shirts, parades, celebrities.*

- *Performance pay (school by school)*
- *Stipend for growth*
- *Public acknowledgement that valuable and meaningful work is being done in classrooms across Oklahoma each day that may not lead to predetermined outcomes.*
- *Get the businesses involved in the school. Kinda like DECA used to be. Have them volunteer at the school and offer education in their area of expertise and give the student an opportunity to work there.*
- *Small awards/recognition/pats on the back along the way (based on regular assessments with immediate feedback) to encourage them to continue hard work.*
- *Rewards for students, recognition in community.*
- *Higher pay for educators. They spend a lot of time at school to prepare lessons and spend money on students out of pocket.*
- *Local recognitions*
- *Rewards for students; more pay for teachers (teachers spend a lot of time out of class and money for their students), local recognition at local events.*
- *Targeted Stipends – but based on what? Value-added.*
- *Encourage teacher collaboration and participation. Use your experts in the schools. Empower teachers.*

Discussion Topic #4: Supports and Interventions for Unsuccessful Schools

Regarding the State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support System:

12. Which 2 or 3 of the following interventions do you believe would have the greatest impact on a school that is not performing well?

- Replacing the administrator(s) - 1
- Providing the administrator(s) with more autonomy and decision-making authority - 5
- Replacing some of the least effective teachers - 13
- Mandated professional development for teachers and administrators in content areas and instructional strategies that match the needs of the students in the building - 14
- Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for learning - 5
- Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include time for teacher collaboration - 13
- Using data to inform instruction and continuous improvement - 16
- Establishing a school environment that is safe and conducive to students' social, emotional, and health needs - 11
- Providing ongoing opportunities for family and community engagement - 18
- Other suggestions:

- *Specifically for poverty!*
- *We can't teach if the basic needs aren't met!*
- *Streamlining paperwork & requirements*
- *Redesigning/redefining "seat time" to expand opportunities for virtual learning, evening hours, school-work programs*
- *Mandated professional development for teachers and administrators in content areas and instructional strategies that match the needs of the students in the building – this needs to be funded by the state.*
- *Look at school individually. See why. Large amount of IEP students, ELL students, etc.*
- *Figure out what's wrong and fix it. If the children are hungry, homeless, poorly parented, etc.....blaming the school isn't helpful.*

- *Minimize curriculum alignment. Make the teacher teach. Have a base alignment and then let the teacher expand.*
- *Need state testing results before the school year is over. Waiting over the summer is crazy. As a parent, we need that information in a timely manner. I think that teachers would benefit from this as well.*
- *Quit focusing on punitive interventions. Use teachers as the degreed professionals they are. There are great ideas in our schools/classes that get ignored because it comes from a teacher.*
- *Avoiding strategies that add meetings or paperwork to existing teacher workday/workload.*
- *At that point or before, get parents involved. They need to have a stake in the process.*
- *Give the administration training in leadership and guidance. Teachers are only as good and motivated as their leadership.*
- *Not all teachers need the same professional development.*
- *Allow teachers with administrators to develop what they think is needed and provide them with the resources to do them.*

13. What are the supports that a school might need in order to have the greatest improvement in student learning in a short period of time?

Please share 2 or 3 suggestions.

- *Reconstitution of poorly performing schools*
- *Please take into consideration schools trying and making strides already*
- *Provide funds to involve parents in the system*
- *Pay child care for parents who want to help*
- *Finances to purchase materials or technology to assist in learning & testing strategies & teacher salaries*
- *School autonomy to address needs*
- *IEP testing reform*
- *Elimination of required classroom seat time*
- *Lower class size or/adequate amount of teachers aides/tutors*
- *Necessary technology*
- *Collaboration time amount teachers, parents, & other schools*
- *More bodies*
- *Building capacity and/or redefining district central offices*
- *Streamline, reduce, eliminate paperwork, reports, etc. due to OSDE to allow principals to do what is important in the schools (i.e., develop web-based comprehensive system for all state/federal plans and forms.)*
- *After school programs/tutors*
- *Mentor programs for reading and math*
- *Educate community on the needs of students and schools*
- *Technology – Training – Funding After School Programs*
- *Independent review of performance (inputs, processes, outcomes).*
- *Put more resources in schools that have higher proportions of children in poverty. They need more teachers who have more time for individual kids.*
- *Technology*
- *Out of school time instructional and leadership programs taught by teachers (extra pay for this)*
- *Schools are not used to sit idle too many hours of the day.*

- *Intense training and support of teachers.*
- *More time on task*
- *I would evaluate the morale and behaviors of the students and staff of low achieving schools.*
- *ELL testing and IEP student testing should be reformed.*
- *After school programs*
- *We must remember that education is a privilege not a right.*
- *Empower each school district to make the decisions that are best for that district.*
- *Encourage school district to promote parent involvement.*
- *Year-round education*
- *After school program*
- *School events such as talent shows, choir programs, etc. to get parents more involved*
- *Software – utilize sites like IXL*
- *Funding small class size and bring more paraprofessionals to relieve the burden of the teacher and free them to more instruction practices.*
- *Social and health/nutrition services incorporated into the school setting without charge to parents.*
- *Elimination of seat time requirements for class credit.*
- *Less earmark spending, relying on schools to identify where and how funds need to be spent.*
- *Parental involvement*
- *Professional development that addresses low performing areas.*
- *Mentor teacher programs that include teachers that have demonstrated success, not just those who want to get financial incentives or the extra job duty.*
- *Low student-teacher ratio.*
- *Financial means*
- *After school programs that provide mentorship.*
- *Increase school days*
- *Financial*
- *Class size – smaller*
- *Reform tests for IEP students*
- *Professional development*
- *Collaboration time*
- *Community and parental involvement in the school.*
- *Greater resources available for additional services.*
- *Change testing for IEP and ELL students.*
- *Smaller class sizes, more classroom paraprofessionals, after school tutoring programs.*

Other Topics of Discussion as Suggested by Forum Participants

14. Please share other thoughts you may have regarding Oklahoma's ESEA Flexibility request.

- *As you put together a system to show accountability, please be sure to submit new plans to show ELL students progress, something that is achievable*
- *Revamping the idea of traditional education*
- *Please, please, please take in account the things schools and community leaders cannot control-poverty and parenting accountability*

- *Progress model*
- *Field trips, real life opportunities*
- *Eliminate SES requirements*
- *Get rid of the WISE tool. Anything that requires 45 pages of instructions needs to be rethought.*
- *Proper assessment of students with disabilities and language learners.*
- *I think it allows schools to be much more successful.*
- *Elimination of the API and AYP reports until a simple and transparent system can be designed and implemented.*
- *Administration needs training, more collaboration needs to take place between colleagues and administrators.*
- *Only 30 at this meeting, will there be other meetings?*
- *Competency-based vs. seat-time.*
- *Look at growth.*

15. Please share other thoughts you may have regarding the school-community partnerships in your district.

- *Do not penalize students/schools with a “4-year” graduation rate.*
- *Do away with seat time*
- *Assist low performing schools with after school programs.*
- *Give districts more flexibility to implement programs that work.*
- *Give districts more flexibility to spend federal dollars so we can better serve students*
- *Establish funds to support parent/community partnerships*
- *SDE partner w/community agencies to implement & maintain successful partnerships*
- *SDE partner w/DHS to improve child care settings*
- *I am sure there are several, but we have the Early Birds program for 0-5 years. The parents come & learn at each level what they can do to help their child succeed at school*
- *We need to educate the community on how the accountability works with the schools/teachers and make them aware of the needs they can meet and the needs they can have met.*
- *Poverty is a big issue. Students come to school hungry, sleepy, upset, etc. daily. After school program. More funding for paraprofessionals. Need to get back to individuality for IEP students. Modified Assessments & Portfolio students there should not be a slotted amount of % students allowed. We are supposed to provide each student with the assessment to their ability.*
- *Find schools that get good involvement from parents and that aren't in wealthy suburbs. Find out what they are doing and replicate/adapt it.*
- *Make the system seem fair and people will quit gaming it.*
- *NCLB was clearly devised to ensure that schools would fail – how could schools buy in? The next system needs to be doable and focused on improvement, not blame. It needs to be separated from a privatization agenda.*
- *Find some way to bring life back into the classroom. Test prep is scary and dull – and it's not education.*
- *Do something to bring back the study of history, geography, and other social sciences. Bring back incentives for science education, too. What we have now is fear-based curriculum. That can be fixed with this application.*
- *Community Education Forums – small scale @ each school.*

- *Active Business & Education Chamber committees*
- *Out of school time partnerships/initiatives*
- *More middle school OST programs*
- *Success by Six activities – community readers in summer reading programs*
- *School/community partnerships are essential to a healthy community. Schools teach students to be productive community members/workers. So, the collaboration piece is cyclical and essential. But, the community must be aware that just because they went to school, they are not experts like teachers and administrators.*
- *Recognition that many Oklahoma schools exist outside of urban environments with little or no business or industry available for partnerships.*
- *Parents have to get involved and the community has to come together to help support the goal.*
- *Community groups should encourage employees and business people to be involved in their students' school life to ensure success. (time off to attend parent/teacher conferences, incentives to attend school meetings/events)*
- *The full burden cannot be put on schools/teachers.*
- *There is always a need to increase community involvement.*
- *PD funds need to be reinstated. Those funds are critical for mentoring programs, collaboration, and other much-needed PD.*
- *There must be flexibility in the testing requirements for ELL and Special Ed students. The 2% and 1% caps on modified assessments are not adequate when we have a 16.5% Special Ed population.*
- *The third grade reading law should be repealed. Research does not support retention. It increases the likelihood of dropping out in high school.*
- *Thank you for the opportunity for input. When will there be an opportunity for input by school administrators.*
- *Very difficult. We have made attempts and will continue to – but it is very hard to get people who will make a true commitment over a period of time to do school – community involvement. Meetings between communities and schools. Feed people and ask for input. Community schools are showing great results – need people dedicated to help those partnerships. Study those that are working – Eugene Field Elementary in Tulsa.*
- *As a teacher of 30 years for every grade from kindergarten through 5th grade, as well as a parent of four children and grandparent of six children, I am appalled at the required retention of 3rd graders who are not reading at 3rd grade level. Learning is very developmental process. Every child may not be reading at 3rd grade level at the end of 3rd grade and still be a successful student. Reading instruction continues through 5th grade and in some districts even longer. There is no reason to punish children who are slower developmentally in their learning achievement. There is absolutely no research to substantiate the retention of a 3rd grade student making them a more successful reader. There is research support not retaining students. Socially, this is mortifying for students at 3rd grade and self-esteem is an important element in learning, as well. Please reconsider this mandate!!*