

Fight the fight for teachers

[Business](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

New proposed legislation suggests that we measure teachers based only on their students' standardized test scores, but this is not fair. Not only are tests an ineffective way to measure how much students are learning, but they are also a horrible indicator of a teacher's effectiveness. Standardized tests are ineffective measurements of learning because they promote rote memorization instead of valuable skills needed for life; students are taught to regurgitate facts onto a test paper and then immediately forget the information. Once students complete the examination, the information retained usually amounts to very little. From my own experience, I know that standardized test scores often do not reflect my capability of creativity and higher-level thought.

Tests are not stimulating—they're suffocating, and they actually prevent students from learning. The fact that teachers are measured based on their students test scores is ridiculous. Many test results do not showcase the intellect and critical thinking skills that students possess. It's also very likely that a student who has test anxiety will perform poorly on a test—even if he/she is a teacher's best student. Because students face so much pressure to do well on tests, they're subject to anxiety and likely lower scores; I know many smart people who have done badly on standardized tests due to anxiety. Whether the student had a bad day or a bad breakfast or simply a bad night's sleep, it's extremely possible that the test does not reflect the student's ability.

So if it's probable that other factors played into students' test scores, how can we possibly measure teachers based on those results? The new legislation is even more than that. Teachers will be evaluated not by their

bosses who physically observe their work, but by a government standard of effective or ineffective. Basically, strangers are evaluating the teachers.

Here's an example of how the new system would work: if my teacher were to give my AP English class an 11th grade regents in September, we would all most likely score very high A's—we are smart kids and we've had a lot of exposure to English. Additionally, we are in an AP class, which means we are completing college-level work. Then if she gave the same test to us in June, we would probably score approximately the same.

If my teacher were measured with the new proposed standards, she would be rated ineffective because our scores did not dramatically improve. This simply is not fair. Anyone observing my AP English class this year would call my teacher very effective. She is intelligent, organized and an incredibly special teacher. I am learning a ton in her class and I am so happy to have her.

Despite this experience and my achievement in her class, it is quite possible for me to have a bad day in the middle of June. It's also quite possible that I wouldn't improve simply because I have already mastered the regents-level material before entering the AP class. It is so important that we fight to protect the amazing teachers in this world. Teachers are some of the most important people in our society: they're kind, patient, smart, and hardworking. Teachers are the reason we have presidents, doctors, lawyers, counselors, and accountants.

Teachers are the reason we have a bright future—they look after children for much of the day. Teachers are parents and mentors; they are colleagues and friends.