

March 9, 2009

Dear Legislator,

We represent a group of students concerned with the way that the state has chosen to assess our fellow students and the schools they attend. We find several things wrong with the CSAP test . Among these things are cost, time, and effectiveness. We have a few recommendations to improve this test.

The CSAP test requires a lot of time to perform. This can cause difficulty for the curriculum of schools because it takes around two weeks. to review for and complete the CSAPs. In this valuable time we could be advancing our learning. In some classes students may mis up to a unit of learning. There should be a more efficient way to assess the accomplishments of the youth of today.

The CSAP tests core subjects such as science, reading, and writing. the administration at schools want to improve their scores on the test so they cut programs that keep people in school, like art, music, and sometimes even history. This usually does not work with the requirements to graduation from school. Thus, to make their CSAP scores higher they lower their arts and history requirements. Artistic classes improve students ability to learn, and teach creativity. These students lack support for creativity and therefor will have a harder time competing on a global market.

Many teachers, parents, and students are puzzled with the timing of CSAPs in the middle of the school year, during the month of March. it would make more sense to have the test at the end of the year, so that it actually tests what the students have learned. Another idea for the timing is to have a pretest at the begining of the year, and have post test at the end of the year as well. This would work better because it would show how each student has improved throughout the year. This would actually show how much a student has improved over a year.

In conclusion, the idea behind having a way to measure the performance of the schools in colorado is good, but the way that the state mandates it is wrong. In the place of CSAP there should be a new kind of test. this test should be valid reliable and norm referenced. The CSAP test either needs to be greatly revised or entirely rewritten to be functional and reliable.

Concerned students from Fairview High School,

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