

My name is Tom Di Liberto, a recently retired educator with 39 years of experience, and I am writing in support of SB 596. Throughout my career there has always been some element of standardized testing done in schools. But it was balanced with informal and formal teacher-crafted formative assessments. However, the number and duration of these tests have ballooned over the years to a point where it has become difficult for some to remember what it was like before we got to this point.

In 2018 at the middle school level, we were losing two full weeks of instructional time to train for, practice for, and proctor just the Smarter Balanced test. Unfortunately, there were other standardized tests that students had to endure as well. The results came quite late and weren't particularly useful. This remains the case. At the kindergarten level, my colleagues reported having to administer similar tests to five year-olds, many of whom were so worried about the pressurized process and the results that many cried during the experience. It is clear that this type of assessment is inappropriate for this age group.

It is becoming clearer every year that we are not better off now thanks to the current level of standardized testing. However, years pass, and in spite of growing disillusionment of their overuse, we continue to lack the courage to admit that the current level of standardized assessments, especially at this grade level, is not in our students' interest. I urge this body to finally do the right thing, the sensible thing, and say "Enough."