

As a former elementary school teacher, and current Educational Assistant in kindergarten, I am writing in support of bill SB 596. I am deeply concerned about the amount of testing that takes place in our early elementary classrooms. In the first eight years of life, there is a great deal of variability in how kids learn, and standardized tests tend to view children in a very homogeneous way. Research has shown the best way to "test" children in the early grades is through performance assessments or observational assessments. With these assessments, teachers observe, record, and then evaluate students by comparing their observations to explicit, well-developed standards of performance across the entire curriculum. The key is that children are unaware they are being tested. It is more important to believe in our children than to believe in the tests. Therefore, please follow the example of New York and New Jersey by not requiring the administering of standardized testing to our pre-kindergarten through 2nd-grade students.