

HB 80

Good afternoon,

I am writing to request your support for any legislation that repeals Common Core tests like AMP and protects student privacy and/or disallows data mining. HB 85 is being introduced by Rep. Reinbold; please support that and any previous or further bills supporting this position. HB 80 repeals AK DEED funding of ACT, SAT, and WorkKeys, which have all been Common Core aligned (this is not a controversial statement, the College Board announced it). Why is AK spending any more money on Common Core items such as these tests when legislation passed making that illegal? As I understand it, no further expenditures on Common Core items are allowed. HB 80 simply puts things back how they were - kids can still take ACT, SAT and WorkKeys. In fact, DOL offers WorkKeys free for anyone over 16 (so is AK DEED just offering these to glean the data for the P-20W?).

There are serious privacy problems with the data-gathering and sharing going on in connection to the AMP tests. Public school students can refuse to take the test without being denied re-enrollment for the next year, however, I and thousands of other parents are being told by the IDEA homeschool program (and even more if you include all the other correspondence programs) that we face denial of re-enrollment for the upcoming year. Parents are not sure if remedial learning measures will be taken against students who end up with a "0" score as a result of test refusal. In a letter sent out to IDEA families by Tim Cline, he said, "every non - tester will be counted as below - proficient". I have watched friends whose children scored below- or far below- proficient get their curricular choices narrowed by IDEA urging heavily that they use remedial learning materials. In one case, the mom knew her daughter's poor scores were a result of simply not having covered the material yet and she just wanted to keep moving forward in the same curriculum knowing her daughter 1) was finally learning well and grasping concepts in that curriculum and 2) would cover that material eventually. She was bullied about this by IDEA staff to the point she ended up leaving IDEA. My point here is that building-based public school students are not treated this way. Homeschoolers deserve a firm legal way to refuse the test without consequence to the child or the family from the program (IDEA) or from anywhere else.

I concur with the details of the data privacy concerns laid out in correspondence to you by Barbara Haney & Bonnie Cameron. I constantly see FERPA in documents cited as an assurance of privacy. FERPA was gutted effective Jan. 2012 specifically to allow the sharing of a minor's personally-identifying information (PII, as some AK documents refer to it) without consent. Obtaining consent is no longer law. FERPA means nothing anymore. Also, data breaches happen all the time and there are specific IT problems with some of the drives AK has chosen to use with AAI's KITE program (for use with the AMP tests).

The responsibility for the data falls on the districts and the boroughs. Do the borough mayors understand this? Do the superintendents? They seem clueless for the most part. Are they insured in case of a data breach?

There is another side to this, though - who is responsible for the data while it is out of state? What privacy guidelines do they follow?

Watch this 1 1/2 minute video from the AK State legislature. Her testimony is in direct opposition to what is coming from AKDEED & Hanley to IDEA. She describes in detail exactly how they plan to do this.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98VpMaZDc-0>

Commentary under the video states, ""The testimony makes it clear that the student data that is identifiable will be retained by ACPE. Since they are also the Alaska Student Loan Corporation... they can determine career paths (talent pipelines) through the Student Loan Program. By simply refusing certain students for certain loans in certain majors, they can have an enormous influence on student outcomes. They claim they are studying it, but they are actually in a position to determine the very outcome they are claim[SIC] to study. "

So, they DO retain identifiable Data and they DO track children and they admit it clearly here. Notice that children are "unit" records, and that they will go back and link those "unit" records. That is tracking.

Also watch this shorter version of House Testimony on the P-20W database which includes OASIS, DOL Wage database, the PFD, and the UA IPEDs data. The clip focuses on the use of student data from the AMP.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRxDDJAB8yg>

We did not consent to our children's data being entered into all these databases. When I signed my IDEA re-enrollment form last spring, it did not say "AMP" tests. In fact, IDEA told us SBAs would still be in use. Many of us would not have re-enrolled otherwise. That has to nullify the testing agreement. They changed it mid-year, and even changed their testing agreement form (it is online, so most of us have no hard copy to reference though some printed screen-shots.) It's not just the overall AMP test score recorded, there is fine-grain data that even though they say they encode or disaggregated can easily be put back together & traced back to the individual. Fine-grain data comes from the Unique Electronic Numbers (UENs) attached to each AMP standard (or each verb/skill within a standard). Those are like the tags with a bar code at the grocery store. Just as the store can do a product inventory using those codes, some codes showing "0" if they are out of a product, a child's profile in the database(s) will show whether he mastered, failed, etc. each UEN tested. With the computer adaptive testing, there is the gathering of biometric and psychometric information. AAI, Alaska's new test company, published an article boasting their new lead expert psychometrician.

Thank you,
Taryn Luskleet
North Pole, AK