

On Wed, Apr 6, 2016 at 7:40 PM, Superintendent Balow <superintendent@wyo.gov> wrote:

Dear Leonie,

Thank you for writing to me about the PARCC and SBAC assessments. I share your concerns about machine scoring of student tests. Your questions seem to be aimed at states using a consortium assessment. In Wyoming, we do not assess students using the SBAC or the PARCC. We administer a test configured to learning expectations for Wyoming students called PAWS. I hope this information is helpful.

Jillian

Jillian Balow
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Wyoming Department of Education
[\(307\) 777-7675](tel:3077777675)

On Tue, Apr 5, 2016 at 1:31 PM, Leonie Haimson <leoniehaimson@gmail.com> wrote:

April 5, 2016

Dear Superintendent Jillian Balow:

As parents and advocates, we have many outstanding concerns about the administration and scoring of the PARCC and SBAC Common Core exams this spring. There are several unresolved questions the answers to which have not been publicly revealed. The original PARCC contract called for two thirds of the students to have their ELA exams, including written responses, entirely scored by computers this spring, with only 10 percent of them re-checked by humans.

Similarly, according to the SBAC contract, 100 percent of students' written responses would be scored by computers, with only half re-checked by a human being.

This is despite the fact that many experts have cited the inability of computers to assess the creativity and critical thought that the Common Core standards were supposed to demand and these exams to assess, no less distinguish nonsense from coherent narrative and reasoning. In each case, however, states had the option of having the exams entirely hand-scored for an additional charge.

So we demand that you answer the following questions:

1- What percentage of the ELA exams in our state are being scored by machines this year, and how many of these exams will then be re-scored by a human being?

2- What happens if the machine score varies significantly from the score given by the human being?

3- Will parents have the opportunity to learn whether their children's ELA exam was scored by a human being or a machine?

4- Will you provide the "proof of concept" or efficacy studies promised months ago by Pearson in the case of PARCC, and AIR in the case of SBAC, and cited in the contracts as attesting to the validity and reliability of the machine-scoring method being used?

5- Will you provide any independent research that provides evidence of the reliability of this method, and preferably studies published in peer-reviewed journals?

Attached an issue brief showing the lack of evidence for machine-scoring, which can also be read here: <http://tinyurl.com/jvfztnm>.

We look forward to your prompt reply,

Leonie Haimson and Rachael Stickland, Co-Chairs, Parent Coalition for Student Privacy
Julie Woestehoff, Executive Director, Parents Across America and Wyoming parent advocate
Carol Burris, Executive Director, Network for Public Education
Monty Neill, Executive Director, FairTest
Save Our Schools New Jersey
Parents Across Rhode Island
Lee P. Barrios, M.Ed., NBCT, Louisiana Friends of Public Education
Cheri Kiesecker, CO parent, privacy advocate and blogger, Missouri Education Watchdog
Cassie Creswell, More Than A Score, Chicago IL
Dawn Collins, board member, East Baton Rouge (LA) school board
Stephanie Zimmerman, Idahoans For Local Education
Wendy Katten, Raise Your Hand for Illinois Public Education
Michelle Fine, Lynn Fedele, C. McGoey, R. Tuma & E. Halberstadt, Montclair Cares About Schools [NJ]
Arthur Freitas and Kayla Kirkpatrick, M.Ed., Colorado parents
Sheila Resseger, retired teacher from the RI School for the Deaf