**Sent:** Thursday, October 23, 2014 2:14 PM
**Cc:** Burkett, Kay [CO]; Docherty, Fran [CO]
**Subject:** Member Update: Over-Assessing Students

SVVEA Members:

**New Opportunities for Input on Mandated Assessment of Students:**

Teachers are the most qualified and most invested group in the state on the topic of student assessment. The state legislature’s Assessment Task Force has just launched a new *survey for* *teachers only*: [**https://survey.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\_9tOEjKcVNJjGf8p**](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=JcjRgZtBGG6p%2BVjlsm9XmWGScnCtkGqW). You are strongly encouraged you to take this survey. It takes 20 – 25 minutes to complete.

If you would like to provide feedback in a public forum, take advantage of the closest opportunity by attending the Task Force discussion next Tuesday, October 28th at Thompson School District in Loveland (800 S. Taft Ave.) from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm. Similar roundtable discussions are taking place around the state.

**Continuing Opportunity for Input on Mandated Assessment of Students:**

The Task Force also welcomes and encourages direct input from educators and other stakeholders in seeking public response to the following questions:

• What would an effective assessment system include?

• How could Colorado improve its assessment system?

• Do you believe the local assessments administered to students of your district are valuable?

After consideration the above questions and any other input of your own, please send an e-mail to **1202taskforcefeedback@gmail.com** with your comments. Written comments will be shared with the Task Force at each meeting and posted on the web page. See <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/publicinputcomments>  So far over 170 emails have been received by the Task Force, but they are predominantly from parents. It’s essential that teachers’ voices are included.

**October 21st AR Meeting**

I’d like to extend huge thanks to the many ARs who attended this past Tuesday’s October AR meeting. Every level was well represented. A huge thanks as well to SVVSD Board of Education member and former president John Creighton who attended as our special guest.

As noted in the 9/24 Member Update, John is one of the 15 appointed members on the state’s Assessment Task Force gathering feedback on the impact of students’ assessments in order to provide recommendations by January 31st for the upcoming 2015 legislative session. (CDE has posted an online site with plenty of information about the Assessment Task Force at [**http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/taskforce**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/taskforce) **.**)

John’s visit with our ARs was a unique opportunity for SVVEA to have a tremendous influence on this Task Force. In addition to providing first-hand information about the purpose and progress of the Task Force, John fielded many questions and took in the input of your ARs. John and Superintendent Don Haddad have also visited with our local parent activists group, Grassroots St. Vrain, and each indicated that parents are teachers are almost on the exact same page with reactions to the excessive testing, including the unnecessary stress placed upon students and their parents and teachers.

John stated, “It is difficult to underestimate the discontent with the amount of state testing” and characterized the assessment trend over the past several years thus: “The state keeps adding tests, instead of making choices. This is unsustainable.” And it has already gone too far. John is advocating for “time boundaries” for mandated state assessments (i.e. many fewer hours of testing), as well as assessment results available in a timely manner. Currently, Colorado requires far more testing than federal mandates require.

The topic of over-testing consistently ranks among teachers’ greatest concerns, so please take advantage of the opportunities to advocate for less testing and more learning time in our classrooms. To say that your input on this issue is important is an understatement.

Let your voice be heard!

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