

**From:** Merklein, Trip [CO]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 14, 2012 8:29 AM  
**Cc:** Docherty, Fran [CO]; Burkett, Kay [CO]  
**Subject:** Nego Update / Galileo Testing 2012-13  
**Importance:** High

SVVEA Colleagues:

**Many Questions Raised About Galileo** This year began with numerous member phone calls and emails concerning Galileo. More information and insight was collected during the SVVEA Fall 2011 Member Survey, and continued through meetings with members and your building Association Representatives. The most recent feedback was gathered from the Spring Follow-Up Survey. It is clear that Galileo testing has already been a major workload issue for many K-12 teachers. At best, members speak of the *potential* of Galileo, but also that it competes with valuable instructional time, the availability of computer labs and limited paper/copy resources. Some principals have even confided concern about the demands of Galileo. Additionally, its use has been applied inconsistently across the district from school to school. Finally, with validity and reliability issues still remaining to be worked out, data has already been inappropriately used in evaluating some teachers.

**More Than Just “No New Initiatives”** Though Galileo testing may not yet have had a direct impact on every teacher or subject area, it has generated enough questions to justify pulling it back as a district-wide initiative. Many teachers have put valuable time and effort in to developing this resource, and they and others may continue to do so at their professional discretion. However, before Galileo should roll out district-wide, serious questions about it need to be answered. How it will be used must be clearly defined and communicated, particularly with SB 191 requiring that half of a teacher’s evaluation be based on multiple measures of students’ academic growth. With so much at stake, before proceeding with it any farther district-wide, Galileo must be shown to be a useful, reasonable, valid and reliable assessment instrument, particularly in light of other competing demands in this tight budget era.

**May 9<sup>th</sup> Curriculum and Assessment Dept. Presentations to the BOE** I would like to thank the SVVEA members, Board Directors, and ARs who answered the call to attend last Tuesday’s Board of Education meeting, and especially Lydia Hibl (SVVEA Director, Prairie Ridge Elem.) and Shawna Fildes (AR, Red Hawk Elem.) who joined me in addressing the BOE to provide teachers’ perspectives about curriculum and assessment, bringing balance to the presentation by the SVVSD Dept. of Curriculum and Assessment.

**Galileo Testing is Optional for 2012-13** Last Friday afternoon, May 11, Superintendent Don Haddad met with all principals to inform them that use of the District’s

standardized Galileo testing shall be based individual teacher's professional discretion in the upcoming 2012-13 school year. While individual teachers may chose to administer Galileo to their students and continue to receive district training, technical support, data, etc., Galileo's will *not* be required next year by administrative directive from either building principals or district level administration, such as the Department of Curriculum and Assessment.

With only a few final details to be wrapped up, expect an email announcement about Tentative Agreement with the District by early this afternoon.

Sincerely,

*Trip Merklein*

PRESIDENT

St. Vrain Valley Education Association

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