

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA
Resolution No. 14-08

A RESOLUTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA ("School Board") AS RECOMMENDED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY ("Superintendent of Schools") IN OPPOSITION TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ("FLDOE") INTENT TO ISSUE SCHOOL GRADES AND TO CONNECT STUDENT ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO BOTH RETENTION AND PROMOTION AND TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATIONS, DURING A PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO NEW STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS.

WHEREAS, The School Board and Superintendent of Schools support and commend the FLDOE's revision to and implementation of the new Florida Standards and the full testing of students on the new assessment in 2014-15; and

WHEREAS, a fair, valid, and reliable state accountability system is supported by the School Board and Superintendent of Schools to ensure that all students are prepared and inspired to ensure success in college, workforce, and life; and

WHEREAS, 34 changes to the accountability system over the last three years and the prevention of school grades being reduced by more than a letter grade has led the public to lose confidence in the school grading system; and

WHEREAS, the FLDOE has purchased the state of Utah's reading and math assessment to be administered in Florida without first field testing the assessment on students in Florida; and

WHEREAS, the transition timeline created by the FLDOE does not allow for a systematic and purposeful conversion to the new standards; and

WHEREAS, teachers need time to master the new standards, item specifications, and changes in instruction necessitated by the rigor embedded within the new standards; and

WHEREAS, the FLDOE has not provided adequate or timely training on the new writing assessment; and

WHEREAS, because a finalized writing rubric was not adopted by the FLDOE until October 2014, with district training not scheduled until December 2014, teachers are left unable to timely prepare students for the new writing assessment to be administered in March 2015; and

WHEREAS, the lack of instructional materials and resources, including technology, is severely deficient in meeting the new standards and preparing students for the new testing platform; and

WHEREAS, professional development must play a major role in the transition to the new Florida Standards and time is needed to fully and confidently implement the professional development initiatives to properly prepare our teachers; and

WHEREAS, the FLDOE did not release item specifications for the new assessments in adequate time to develop and prepare for professional development, district progress monitoring tools, and curriculum decisions before the start of the school year; and

WHEREAS, the FLDOE properly field tested the FCAT before issuing school grades in 1998; and

WHEREAS, the FLDOE has not field tested the new assessments with Florida students to responsibly determine their learning gains and therefore issue accurate 2014-2015 school grades; and

WHEREAS, the 2015-2016 Florida Standards Assessment must be considered a baseline in generating accurate cut scores and therefore determining appropriate achievement levels and passing scores; and

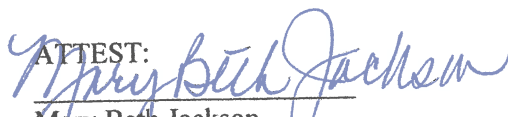
WHEREAS, the United States Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, has allowed states to postpone tying student achievement to teacher and principal evaluations for one year for states implementing the new standards; and

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Okaloosa County, Florida:

1. That the Florida Legislature, in cooperation with the FLDOE, fully implement the new Florida Standards and test all students and grade levels during the 2014-15 school year while transparently publishing all results at the state, district, school, and teacher level to establish baseline data.
2. That FLDOE not issue school grades tying 2014-15 as well as 2015-2016 test results to the retention of students at the third grade level and teacher and principal evaluations until 2016-2017.

ADOPTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD OF OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA IN REGULAR SESSION THIS 10TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2014.


Rodney L. Walker
Chairman

ATTEST:

Mary Beth Jackson
Superintendent