

Summit Hill School District, Illinois District 161, Resolution Concerning the Illinois Assessment of Readiness

WHEREAS, the Summit Hill School District Board of Education passed a resolution regarding concerns with the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) at its January 15, 2020 Board of Education meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Summit Hill School District Board of Education believes the purpose of education is to educate a populace of critical thinkers who are capable of shaping a just and equitable society in order to lead good and purpose-filled lives, not solely prepare that populace for college and career; and

WHEREAS, the Summit Hill School District Board of Education fully supports educational policies and practices designed to provide results that promote and improve student learning, achievement, and best teaching practices; and

WHEREAS, instructional and curricular decisions should be in the hands of district, school, and classroom professionals who understand the context and interests of their students; and

WHEREAS, in order for a standardized test to give meaningful information, it must first be administered to a nationally normed sample group and proven to have reliability and validity; and

WHEREAS though the Summit Hill School District Board of Education believes in some form of standardized testing, we believe there is a value in our own district-chosen formative and benchmark assessments that yield data driven educational decision-making;

WHEREAS, parents, teachers and communities have seen high-stakes, low-quality tests unfairly label low income students, students with disabilities, English language learners, and minority students as failing; and

WHEREAS, the practice of using standardized test scores as a basis for erroneously labeling districts, schools, and students has harmed communities; and

WHEREAS, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides an opportunity for Illinois to end the use of corporate designed, unvalidated tests and the misuse of the related test data; and

WHEREAS, it is not clear that Illinois will use the opportunity afforded by ESSA to change and innovate its standardized tests and testing program, choosing instead the status quo—continuing the use of corporate designed, unvalidated tests and refusing to reconsider the misuse of standardized test data to measure student learning and district and school performance;

RESOLVED, that the Summit Hill School District Board of Education encourages Illinois to use the opportunity afforded by ESSA to modify the standardized tests used for the assessment of students and their testing policies so that both align to what helps improve teaching and learning for all students; and

RESOLVED, that the Summit Hill School District Board of Education opposes the use of any standardized tests or assessments when the results are used to label or compare communities, districts, schools, programs, teachers, or students; and

RESOLVED, that the Summit Hill School District Board of Education urges Illinois to reduce the amount of state standardized testing to the minimum level required by federal law and provide maximum flexibility to school districts to choose formative and benchmark assessments; and

RESOLVED, that the Summit Hill School District Board of Education opposes the use of any standardized tests or assessments that has a disparate negative impact on students of highest need along income, class, disability, native language, or race lines; and

RESOLVED, that the Summit Hill School District Board of Education opposes the use of any standardized tests or assessments that have not been proven to have reliability and validity using generally accepted testing and research procedures; and

RESOLVED, that the Summit Hill School District Board of Education will work to implement an engaged and socially relevant curriculum that is student-based and supported by research; and

BE IT FURTHERRESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to each member of the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois State Representative for District 37 , the Illinois Senator from the 19th district, Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, the President of the Illinois Senate, the Governor of the State of Illinois, and the Illinois Association of School Boards.