

# TEACH NOT TEST

## 2021 IL STATE TESTING UPDATE What you need to know:

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is considering a proposal to replace the annual math and reading tests for 3-8th grade (IAR) with interim tests given **three times a year** and made available for **K-2nd** grade as well.

To meet federal requirements Illinois school districts will need to pilot this new test until 2024 or 2025. This means 20% of students would take *both* the IAR *and* these new tests until then. The expected cost of the new test is **\$228M** over the next 10 years on top of the cost for the remaining four years of IAR testing--yet there is no evidence these commercial interim tests increase student achievement.

### WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

- **This proposal would require high-stakes state tests three times each year**—adding even more time for high-stakes testing and test prep to the school year.
- Students in grades K-2 do not need the pressure of high-stakes state tests and standardized tests have little reliability or validity in early childhood. **The federal government does not require K-2 testing, why should Illinois?**
- **Commercial interim assessments are not designed to be used for high-stakes accountability and do not provide valid diagnostic information for day-to-day instruction.** But many schools continue to use them for that purpose. Using large-scale interim assessments as part of state testing puts the State Board's seal of approval on a practice that assessment experts do not endorse.

- **Recent research on growth and achievement in Illinois districts' use of commercial interim tests coincided with declines in academic growth** in grades four through eight. Chicago has now dropped the NWEA MAP test altogether.
- Federal law requires states to use test results to rate schools. **We know that when high-stakes ratings are attached to standardized tests, the result is often “teaching to the test,”** Increasing high-stakes tests from one to three times each year will exacerbate this problem, especially in underserved Black and Brown communities.

### TIMELINE:

The State Superintendent initially asked the State Board to approve this proposal in May 2021. But intense push back from educators, parents, and assessment experts has put a pause on the vote. Stakeholder feedback sessions are now being scheduled and the Board is scheduled to consider the findings from those sessions in December.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You can help by **calling your state legislators to tell them you oppose the proposal to increase state testing to three times a year and any expansion of state testing for grades K-2.** Urge them to ask ISBE to stop this proposal and work with assessment experts and all stakeholders to build a more balanced system of state and local assessments from the ground up.

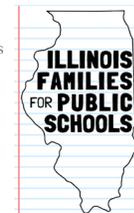
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