

# Memo

To: Board of Education  
The Herricks Community  
All Herricks Staff

From: John Bierwirth

Date: July 2, 2014

Re: APPR Plan

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On July 1, 2014, we received an email from the New York State Education Department entitled "Assessment Administration in Conjunction with Annual Professional Performance Reviews (APPRs)". That email directs the district to post the memo on the district website which we have done. We are also posting this as a response. It is not our intent to respond to the New York State Education Department. Too much time and energy has already been diverted from the education of Herricks. We would prefer to waste no more time for little or no purpose.

Several key points:

1. SED does not understand our plan. Herricks along with a number of other districts across the State led the way in developing APPR plans which maximized the use of group metrics across as many areas as possible. Educationally, this makes sense in some areas and little sense in others but it allows Herricks to comply with State requirements with minimal diversion of time and resources.
2. SED does not understand that we dropped all remaining stand-alone pre-tests after the first year of APPR.
3. SED suggests that we reduce the amount of testing by dropping AimsWEB and NWEA and using only New York State assessments. We use both AimsWEB and NWEA for instructional purposes. We would happily recommend dropping New York State assessments if we could as they serve little or no instructional value in Herricks. AimsWEB and NWEA are valuable to Herricks parents, students and educators. They also serve to double-check on the validity of New York State assessments. We would like to reduce testing but dropping instructionally valuable assessments and relying on those with little or no instructional value makes no sense.
4. The language of the memo suggesting that none of the over-testing is SED's responsibility is disingenuous at best. If "teaching, not testing is the core of the Regents Reform agenda", why are Grades 3-8 tests so incredibly long and why is New York measuring what students learn in a grade level only two-thirds of the way through the school year? Accountability and testing take precedence all too often over standards, professional development and instruction.