

BATS TOOLKIT FOR FIGHTING ESSA IN YOUR STATE

1. **Plan** your strategy. What are you currently interested in fighting for or against? It is good to pick a few target topics for your first meeting so that you provide focus for the meeting.
2. **Coordinate** with a small group of people that are interested in speaking with legislators about the same topics. Find others that are interested in attending these meetings.
3. **Call** your state lawmakers and make appointments to meet with them face-to-face.
<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/state-legislatures.html>
4. **Meet** with your group before your appointments. At least two meetings should be held. During the first meeting determine what your 'asks' will be. Always make sure you are leaving a legislator's office with them knowing what you want them to do. Divide up what each of you will be talking about and presenting. After the first meeting, everyone should work and research to become experts on what they will be speaking about. During the second meeting, a review of what everyone is discussing should occur with everyone finalizing their platforms with the advice of the group. Strategize and set up a speaking order. Coordinate to present the best case for what you are asking.
5. **Print** everything. Make a folder for each of the legislators and each of the team members. Include a contact sheet with a quick reference for each topic so they have an easy way to access information.
6. **Follow up** with the legislators. Send them a thank you for the meeting. Remind them of the points you spoke about. Be vigilant about what is coming up for floor votes and continue to contact them to make them aware of your opinion.

BATs does have the use of a conference line available. Email us for assistance.

Contact.batmanager@gmail.com



The passage of ESSA leaves the possibility for some changes to occur at the state level. BATs has created a list of topics and a few resources to assist BAT members with a start for creating their own platform of legislative talking points at a state and local level.

Teacher evaluations will no longer need to be tied to test scores. States will make their own determination.

American Statistical Association speaks out against VAM

http://www.amstat.org/policy/pdfs/ASA_VAM_Statement.pdf

Multiple years needed to begin to show any validity

http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/EDFP_a_00027#.VmjK_narTIU

Technical requirements for VAM

<http://nepc.colorado.edu/blog/just-released-american>

Misinformation being used by reformers

<http://nepc.colorado.edu/blog/gates-foundation-wastes-more-money-pushing-vam>

Assessment of our students can be changed.

Testing Kids is NOT the Answer

http://www.salon.com/2015/01/03/over_testing_our_kids_is_not_the_answer_its_the_problem/

Push for fewer state and local standardized exams. Standardized tests create measurement driven instruction that teaches to the test.

<http://www.fairtest.org/measurement-driven-instruction>

Demand that your state become a pilot for teacher-driven assessments. Assessments that include collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills.

Advocate for performance-based assessments that mirror the NYC consortium of schools.

<http://performanceassessment.org/performance/index.html>



Your state or districts should not be requiring any assessments that are not mandated by the ESSA. There is a grant that each state can apply for to analyze all testing that is done in an effort to reduce how much students are tested. Within your state, you can stop the use of Federal funding to finance online testing systems. We need to bring attention to the fact that we need money to restore budgets so that schools can better service children, not provide tests. (nurses, libraries, teachers, clean and safe facilities)

<http://www.cbpp.org/research/most-states-funding-schools-less-than-before-the-recession>

<http://www.cbpp.org/research/an-update-on-state-budget-cuts>

Local exams should not be embedded into online learning.

Effectiveness of Computer-Based Education in Elementary Schools

<http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/25814/0000377.pdf?sequence=1>

There should be no testing in pre-k to grade 3, other than what the teacher decides is necessary for his or her own instruction.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/05/02/6-reasons-to-reject-common-core-k-3-standards-and-6-axioms-to-guide-policy/>

A test should not be the sole measure used to determine grade promotion or graduation.

<http://nepc.colorado.edu/newsletter/2015/11/NBER-retention>

Other measures are needed to gauge the health of schools. Demand that state takeover/turnaround school models be stopped. Language at the state level must be fought that enables this. Create a model to show how schools should be assessed. Create a plan that outlines what needs to be done with “underperforming” schools. Define who has input for the development of these plans at the local level. Local input is needed to retain local control. Make sure there are measures in place to hold the state accountable for meeting their own requirements for assistance. Develop a model needs assessment and resource analysis that includes community involvement.

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar99/vol56/num06/Why-Standardized-Tests-Don't-Measure-Educational-Quality.aspx>

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/06/18/36neill.h29.html>



Demand an end to Common Core State Standards

<http://dianeravitch.net/2013/02/26/why-i-cannot-support-the-common-core-standards/>

<http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/4/common-core-standardsnewyorkstateandrewcuomo.html>

<https://www.aei.org/publication/how-the-common-core-went-wrong/>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2015/06/13/common-core-killing-kindergarten/lydG3pnsCvEnTEoELUZWdP/story.html>

https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/NewYorkCommonCoreTaskForceFinalReport_Update.pdf

ALEC

Introduce your lawmakers to the ALEC education connection. Research before you go to see if they are a member. Inform them about Pearson.

<http://fortune.com/2015/01/21/everybody-hates-pearson/>

http://www.alternet.org/story/150463/what_is_alec_dragging_the_secretive_conservative_organization_out_of_the_shadows

The Pearson Education/ALEC Connection:

<http://bigeducationape.blogspot.com/2012/04/pearson-alec-and-brave-new-world.html>

The Pearson Octopus

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alan-singer/international-movement-to_b_7750594.html



DFER and ALEC

<http://www.thenation.com/article/astroturf-activism-who-behind-students-education-reform/>

Right to Work/ALEC/Right Wing

<http://www.prwatch.org/news/2014/06/12498/who-behind-national-right-work-committee-and-its-anti-union-crusade>

Right to Work Boilerplate legislation and how lies perpetuated by manipulating data

<http://qz.com/396598/the-lies-damn-lies-and-statistics-behind-the-boom-in-americas-right-to-work-laws/>

Morna Mc Dermott's chart

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/18442-flow-chart-exposes-common-cores-myriad-corporate-connections>

Test Refusal

All states need to have opt out/test refusal laws in place. Find out if your state has one. Safeguards are needed so that students and schools are not punished for refusal. Rewards should not be given for those that take these tests. Sit and stare policies for kids who refuse testing need to be abolished.

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/13/nyregion/new-york-state-students-standardized-tests.html?_r=0

Sample legislation

http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&bn=A06025&term=2015&Summary=Y&Text=Y

Special Education

Above all else, a child's IEP needs to remain as the number one determination of the educational plan. All IEPs should be created by a team and IEPs can be written to determine and provide what a student needs, even including test refusals.

States should not police the 1% cap on alternative assessments. Local districts are able to go over this cap.

<http://education.jhu.edu/PD/newhorizons/Journals/Winter2012/Johnson>



ESL/ELL/ENL

Demand a full audit by the state education committee of all related programs. The audit should include testimony by a random sample of ESOL teachers for best practices and updates on current harmful practices. Many children are losing classes that teach them the ability to speak and understand English and losing time for support from ESOL teachers.

<http://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/inclusion-or-exclusion-the-esl-education-debate>

TFA

Educate your lawmakers with research about Teach for America. No contracts should be written to bring them into our schools, TFA alum should not be hired to assist with educational policy.

<http://cloakinginequity.com/>

<http://www.shankerinstitute.org/resource/teacherdiversity>

Social Impact Bonds

Make your lawmakers aware of these bonds and how corporations can use them to profit from our schools.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/04/business/dealbook/did-goldman-make-the-grade.html>

<http://www.inthepublicinterest.org/a-guide-to-evaluating-pay-for-success-programs-and-social-impact-bonds/>

Data Privacy

Inform your lawmakers about student and teacher data being shared with third party vendors.

<http://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/most-states-have-cut-school-funding-and-some-continue-cutting>

<http://dataqualitycampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Student-Data-Privacy-Legislation-2015.pdf>

http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/NASBE-Policy-Update-2015-Legislative-Session-Data-Privacy_-_June-2015.pdf

<http://www.studentprivacymatters.org/five-principles-to-protect-study-privacy/>



Federal Bills to Protect Student Privacy

<http://www.studentprivacymatters.org/legislation/>

State Bills to Protect Student Privacy

<http://www.studentprivacymatters.org/state-legislation/>

Charter Schools

Demand stricter accountability for charter schools. If there are monetary concerns, demand a fiscal audit. Each state will have their own laws and regulations in place. If these are not strict enough, demand that they be analyzed and rewritten. Call for a moratorium on charter approvals until stricter regulations are in place.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/finance/auditing/>

http://www.prwatch.org/files/new_charter_school_black_hole_report_oct_21_2015.pdf

Work Environment

A lot will be coming forth about the work environment of teachers. A teacher's work environment is a student's work environment. BATs, along with the AFT research team, was able to get language into the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that sets aside funds in Title II to research a teacher's workplace conditions. You must demand this yearly at the LOCAL LEVEL! Section 2103 (N) of ESSA, Local Uses of Funds states "developing feedback mechanisms to improve school working conditions, including through periodically and publicly reporting results of educator support and working conditions feedback." Be vigilant and perhaps investigate that this be weaved into state education law.

Every Student Succeeds Act Title II Section 2103 (N)

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1177/text#toc-HC726EA4379C94255AF64A66504729C1D>

Quality of Worklife Survey Results

<http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/worklifesurveyresults2015.pdf>



