



An Open Letter to the Communities of Morgan County:

As the superintendents of schools for the four districts operating in Morgan County, we would like to express our concerns about the results of the 2014-2015 ISTEP data released to schools last week. We believe the data to be an inaccurate reflection of our students' academic accomplishments and the quality of teaching in our classrooms.

The test scores, as predicted by the Department of Education, show a significant drop in student achievement from the previous year. We believe the test did not accurately measure the students' attainment. We believe that changes in the testing structure along with arbitrarily chosen cut scores are reflecting a false reality for our county and the entire state. The testing process was a boondoggle with students attempting the practice test several times unsuccessfully resulting in paper and pencil tests. Due to testing vendor problems, this inconsistency in testing methods led to student discouragement and frustration.

Now, we are provided with raw pass/fail information without supporting data on what areas students need improvement. Over half of the testing year is over and we are no closer to receiving pertinent information about student outcomes than before. Next year's information will also be circumspect because of the tardiness in scores and the inability of a district to remediate before the next test.

The testing information does not just impact an individual student's academic record. It has a negative impact on teacher evaluation, compensation, and school accountability grades as well as the entire image of a local community.

We do not believe that our communities are below standard—we do not believe that one test measures our children—we believe this process to be a flawed attempt to implement a legislative agenda. The political agenda is detrimental to our children, our educational system, and our communities.

Our children, teachers and administrators deserve a better way of determining student proficiency. It's time for a better way in Indiana.

Respectfully,

Dr. Bill Roberson, Monroe-Gregg Superintendent

Dr. David Marcotte, Mooresville Superintendent

Jeff Gibboney, Eminence Superintendent

Dr. Michele Moore, Martinsville Superintendent