

Public Comment
Nancy Vernon
January 12, 2006

In 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. stated, "Why is the issue of equality still so far from solution in America, a nation that professes itself to be democratic, inventive, hospitable to new ideas, rich, productive and awesomely powerful."

April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. took his last breath, and here we are almost 40 years later still able to repeat his words to describe the state of affairs in Washington public schools. Racism is America's plague. When public policy embraces the practice of racism, we as the governed must speak out and you must listen.

Senate Bill 6435 supports the use of the current WASL design and its related education reform. For this reason, I do not support this Bill, or any Bill that reinforces the use of the WASL in its current design. The growing achievement gap exposes the WASL's design to advance racism and discrimination within our public schools and ultimately within our society.

Please let me explain.

In a letter dated January 23, 1998, the Superintendent of Public Instruction stated, "The Carkhuff conceptual framework and materials were used by the state's Commission on Student Learning to plan and implement education reform. When Dr. Bergeson became school superintendent, she decided there was a need to develop plans for significant restructuring of OSPI....She decided that Dr. Carkhuff....was the best programmatic and organizational consultant to assist OSPI in planning and implementing the needed changes."

The Carkhuff conceptual framework is the current WASL design and related education reform. In a March 1999, OSPI publication, Dr. Bergeson stated, "Thanks to the work of Dr. Robert Carkhuff and his research and development team we in the State of Washington are honored and excited to launch the New 3Rs....The New 3Rs are a set of skills for [higher-order] thinking."

Carkhuff Conceptual Framework

Carkhuff's conceptual framework is structured around the belief that the

- African American culture is the, "intellectually retarded people."
- Native American people are "impotent and homeless."
- "...before the invention of the cotton gin and the need for cheap labor, black-white relations in the American colony were exemplary..."
- "Physically sick and under-resourced [are]....the unhealthy personality [that] cannot think [and]....has no soul." (In a public document)
- Man, who chooses not to work, is a victim. "Victims are not to be trusted because they kill. Once they kill they cannot stop killing."
- Only those who higher-order think co-process with God. (In a public document)

Recommendations:

- Investigate the conceptual framework of the current WASL design and related education reform before you continue using it to define a child's intellectual worth.
- Investigate the actions of the State Superintendent and other OSPI staff who have used public funds to advance racism and discrimination through the assessment process.
- Schedule a work session to allow me to demonstrate my sound research and evidence so that you are informed and may act accordingly.

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Documents Entered into Public Record with Senate Bill 6435 Public Testimony
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- Public Testimony
- January 23, 1998, letter from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
- March 1999 OSPI publication-segments (pages i, ii,18 and cover) from the 22–page publication
- December 23, 2005, letter addressed to Governor Christine Gregoire from Nancy Vernon
- Carkhuff Conceptual Framework-selected quotes from public documents and published books

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