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Statement of David C. Berliner, Ph. D.

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There is a strongly held opinion among the educational research and the educational assessment communities. They overwhelmingly believe that formal and consequential assessments of children before about fourth grade is neither necessary, nor good for the child. This is my opinion, as well.

Virtually all the important and educationally useful knowledge about a child's abilities and achievements that is uncovered by a highly reliable, valid, technically sound and costly standardized achievement test can readily be acquired in another way. What educators and policy makers need to know about a child can be obtained simply by asking their questions directly to the teachers of the children in whom there is interest. In fact, because they spend so many hours with their students, evidence reveals that teachers not only possess a great deal of knowledge about children and their families, they can also predict children's standardized achievement test scores quite accurately.

So simpler means than standardized testing is available to answer the questions of children posed by educational and political authorities. The old-

fashioned reliance on professional judgement that is recommended for use with young children is in contrast to what can be an anxiety provoking, time consuming, expensive, standardized test of achievement for young children, those in grades PreK-3. I recommend consideration that the assessment of the academic and social skills possessed by young children be the responsibility of professional educators. Older children may deal better with the technology of assessment, particularly its impersonal nature and highly consequential scoring systems. Younger children should not have to endure this.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David C. Berliner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D" and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.