

METRO SPIRIT

AUGUSTA'S INDEPENDENT VOICE

Apples to apples
by : Eric Johnson

AUGUSTA, GA - Former Augustan Beth Farokhi has thrown her hat in the ring for state school superintendent.

The career educator from Cobb County, who retired from Georgia State University about four years ago, decided she didn't like what education had become.

“Education was my whole career, my whole passion, so I decided to utilize my expertise and experience and leadership abilities to run for state school superintendent,” she says. “I thought about it for a long time. It was a question of whether or not I was ready for a major political campaign in a very big state.”



Beth Farokhi

She decided she was, and she's made testing the cornerstone of her campaign.

In short, she thinks there's too much of it.

“We have focused on nothing but our testing,” she says forcefully, “and it's impacting our students, it's impacting our families, it's impacting our communities and it's impacting us all economically.”

She says Georgia needs to be looking at tests that measure Georgia students against students from other states in an apples to apples kind of way.

Like so many students — and parents, for that matter — she doesn't feel that one test administered at the end of the year can realistically evaluate a student's progress. The educator in her contends it's important to measure the total child.

To emphasize her point, she mentions talking to a student who was worried not just about passing the test himself, but about whether the school as a whole was going to pass or fail.

“That's pretty heavy for a young kid.”

As state superintendent, Farokhi says she would have the power to change that because even though No Child Left Behind is a federal requirement, the states have ultimate control over how it's administered.

“The federal guidelines indicate that states should be measuring student achievement,” she says. “It does not say how to do that.”