



# Gladstone School District 115

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Bob Stewart  
Superintendent

March 12, 2013

Co-Chairs Komp and Monroe, and members of the Committee, my name is Bill Stewart representing Gladstone School District and I am here today to provide testimony related to SB 5518, specifically in support of an additional \$5 million to the ODE budget for the full Smarter Balanced assessment package in 2014-15.

The acquisition of the full Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessment package (formative, interim and summative tools) has the potential to provide a number of benefits to Oregon school districts, staff and students -

- Provide a high quality set of tools, aligned to Common Core and SBAC, that will be available to all teachers and students across the state, no matter the size, location, demographics or financial status of their school district
- Enable teachers to monitor student progress during the learning cycle and adjust instruction accordingly
- Improve high school students' ability to, and likelihood of, meeting essential skills requirements for graduation
- Enhance school districts' ability to meet short-term improvement goals and long-term academic trajectory targets on their Achievement Compacts
- Improve the opportunity for schools to provide targeted instructional support that could help close identified achievement gaps
- Support instructional strategies that are aligned with the transition to the Common Core standards
- Calibrate the effectiveness of instruction with the increased rigor of the SBAC assessment, before the single summative attempt allowed for accountability
- Increase the likelihood that districts will meet Annual Measurable Objectives as identified in the federally approved NextGen waiver
- Provide useful data for the implementation of SB 290
- Enable more frequent and accurate proficiency reporting under the requirements of HB 2220
- Provide a common state-wide basis for connecting high-performing schools with other schools that are struggling in one or more specific skill or content areas
- Enable districts to use local funds to target specific school/grade needs in the most effective and efficient way



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The potential support these formative and interim tools could provide to schools reminds me of my own experiences when I was diagnosed with diabetes. Upon diagnosis I was faced with a sudden increase in the knowledge and skills I would need to use successfully to effectively cope with the disease. The challenge I faced was knowing how well I was actually performing during the three months between diagnosis and my first check-in.

Fortunately, I had a way to know my daily, weekly and monthly performance, a tool tied to the same lab standards my doctor would use to evaluate my progress, a blood glucose meter. That meter provided me the feedback I needed to fine-tune the actual use of the new information I had learned about my disease. In much the same way as that meter, the formative and interim SBAC tools will provide useful feedback to teachers, allowing them to fine-tune their instructional strategies, improve the actual learning of their students and ultimately meet the increased rigor, expectations and goals associated with the transition to the new Common Core standards and Oregon's changing education landscape.

Thank you for allowing me to lend my support to this important addition to the instructional toolkit of Oregon's teachers, one that I hope will be made available to all teachers and students across the state, no matter the size, location, demographics or financial status of their school district. I would be happy to respond to questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Stewart".

Bill Stewart  
Assessment, Special Projects and Sustainability Coordinator  
Gladstone School District