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I have recently become aware of HB 4150 and its direct impact on our current work as a district and state related to proficiency. Simply put, the bill is counterproductive to the progress that we have made in the area of proficiency and the reporting of academic and behavior progress to students and parents. Based on HB 2220, we have been successful in establishing a roadmap that is leading to much needed reform in our grading practices as well as transforming our communication to parents and community as well. In reality we believe that we have in fact, moved down the right road. HB 4150 clearly weakens our position and limits our ability to continue toward much needed reform in our district and state.

Redmond School District – approximately 7000 students with over 300 teachers – has been involved in making a shift toward reporting to parents the progress of their students based on standards. We have embraced the belief that behavior, attendance and other environmental factors including extra credit are misleading and often do not depict an accurate picture of competence or proficiency. As a result, we have invested significant financial resource in a new student information system, teacher leader positions and professional development to support the implementation of HB2220.

HB 4150 takes the wind out of the sails for Redmond School District by removing the spirit and context of HB 2220. The expectations outlined in the new bill minimize and/or nullify much of the work our district and teachers have accomplished over the past 18 months. Allowing district leaders the option to include non-academic measures and limiting the number of standards we can expect teachers to report on, places the conflict at a local level with much potential to strain staff and board relationships.

Additionally, the end-of-year report outlined in HB 4150 will not provide significantly different information to parents and students than what districts are currently providing through traditional letter grades. Both reports mix academics and behaviors, which means no meaningful change will come about through HB 4150. What we will find instead is another report to add to the long and competing items on the list of to-do's for teachers. Districts that are truly trying to make a difference and raise the expectations and accuracy of the educational process will once again be tuned out as those less inclined to embrace reform say, "just wait a little while and this too shall pass".

We have several high stakes initiatives that are making this a pivotal political issue for Redmond School District. We are making significant progress in the area of Common Core implementation, restructuring the entire assessment and intervention structure as well as a full-scale evaluation system overhaul. This issue of grading practice and reporting is as significant as any of the fore mentioned initiatives; if we lose momentum on this one, I am fearful that the others may fail as well.

I oppose HB 4150 and fully embrace the ideals of accurately reporting progress of our students. Students that complete a course and receive a grade should feel confident that the grade reflects their ability to accomplish a task or exemplify their skills.

Thank you for your continued concern for the welfare and success of our future generations. Our job is to make success possible for every child in Redmond School district.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael D. McIntosh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a distinct "D".

Michael D. McIntosh
Superintendent