

Testimony - House Bill 2680

House Education Committee

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Madam Chair Doherty and Vice Chair Frederick and members of the committee,

I represent over 850 educators of the North Clackamas Education Association in the North Clackamas School District. My district is known for being an overachiever when it comes to doing what is good for our students and for doing what the state and federal governments mandate. Our teachers have gone through six years without a full school year. We lost 24 percent of our members leading to some of the highest-class sizes in the state four years ago. We lost 45 paid days of being in the classroom all while dealing with a lack of new curriculum and resources planning for the common core. Despite all of that, as the Oregonian reported, our district posted some of the highest graduation rates in the state of Oregon.

We are starting to come out of the deep recession of education funding and now face new rules by the Oregon Department of Education. We all want our kids in school full-time but we will soon be asking our seniors, who have already completed enough credits to graduate, to stay in our high schools to complete unnecessary classes due to the new mandates coming our way.

And, then there is the four-letter dirty acronym....SBAC. Not only have we been told that up to 2/3 of our students will probably fail this corporate test, we are now in a hurried state trying to get teachers trained to train students to take a test we did not take

part in developing. Our evaluation systems have changed. Our resources are still not adequate. Our time to actually teach has been limited so we can teach to the test.

The inequity of all of this has not gone unnoticed by our Association and educators. If you do not live in a home where there is Internet connectivity and a computer you probably will already be behind the learning curve in taking the new test. Students who do not speak English as their primary language will be facing new challenges. And, our students with special needs may not even have a chance at feeling successful as we move into yet a new form of so called evaluation of their learning.

House Bill 2680 is a common sense bill. Educators provide summative assessments based on their students. Our inquiry has depth, based on a strong foundation of learning and student growth goals. Why, for the love of students, are we investing so much time and energy on a test that would never be given by one of us considering we know 2/3 of our students will fail? We then are expected to deal with the implications after the fact.

Educators have no problem with measuring the growth of our students. That's what we do every day. We are still trying to understand why, even in good conscience, we are told these tests must be given to our kids by us... professional educators. I urge your support in House Bill 2680 and also hope you will better understand the implications coming to our classrooms, buildings, districts, and to our students because of this unhealthy obsession with letting corporations test the students we are trying to educate and protect.