



**House Education Committee
February 9, 2015**

Good afternoon Chair Doherty and members of the House Committee on Education. For the record, my name is Hanna Vaandering. I am an elementary physical education teacher and President of the Oregon Education Association. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My testimony today will be focused on the current reality and *the better way* to utilize assessment to promote student learning.

The current use of assessments in our schools is fundamentally flawed. From the billions of dollars we as a nation are spending on high-stakes standardized testing, to students who have so much anxiety --some are crying in front of the computer-- to the culture of failure we are about to unfold with the implementation and Smarter Balanced, we are definitely on the wrong track. OEA and our 42,000 members have shared our concerns since before No Child Left Behind was passed and have advocated for changes to be made to improve outcomes for students.

I could spend my time discussing the realities and sharing the inhumanity and ineffectiveness of the current system. We can't change the past, but we can learn from it to create a better future for Oregon students. So, with that said, I'd like to share some thoughts about the legislation that you will be reviewing today, and the opportunity that you have to build a better way for our students and for public education in Oregon.

We believe now is the time to take action so that every student has a quality learning environment and one in which assessments are used appropriately with each and every student.

House Bill 2680 will ensure the results of the Smarter Balanced Assessment will not be used to rank schools or educators. The Smarter Balanced has not been proven to be valid, reliable, or unbiased. Also, we need to commit to our students and parents that the high-stakes attached to assessment will be removed. We need to assure our students and parents that any summative test will not be used as the only measure of their learning and achievement. We need to take the time to evaluate the results of The Smarter Balanced Assessment -- or any other summative test -- to determine the value as a measure of student learning and mastery of standards.

As Dr. Nancy Golden shared, a group of 16 teachers and other educators from across the state, have been working to create a path forward- a better way – to do assessment in Oregon. Working with Dr. Rick Stiggins, Dr. David Conley and utilizing research from across the nation and around the world, we are proposing recommendations that will share with parents, students, educators and all stakeholders. We will gather and utilize feedback and create a system of assessment that honors student learning and puts the love of learning back in our public schools.

House Bill 2680 gives us an opportunity to begin this journey. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any questions.