

Dear Representative McLain:

This December I and another Oregonian helped present survey results for 945 teachers to the NEA Vice President Betsy Pringle and an Accountability Taskforce in Washington DC. Our project stemmed from a joint NEA and VIVA Idea Exchange to discuss “360 Degree Accountability”. The 945 teachers, including many from Oregon, would endorse your HB 2680 that “prohibits use of results of statewide summative assessment developed by state-led consortium to establish summative ratings of schools or to make summative evaluations of teachers or administrators.”

For over twenty years I taught middle school and high school English and Foreign Language. I received my BA from the University of Oregon Honors College and then earned an MA in German Language and Literature as well as certification to teach English. I also received the Oregon Foreign Language Teacher of the Year Award and was a teacher trainer.

An early advocate of educational reform, I worked on several committees for the Oregon Department of Education to pass House Bill 3565 (The Oregon Educational Reform Act). I also helped draft Oregon’s CIM (Certificate of Initial Mastery) and CAM (Certificate of Advanced Mastery), as well as crafting graduated benchmarks and testing tools for high school. So I feel qualified to comment on the Common Core Standards, as well as Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia tests. I am deeply disappointed.

I wasn’t the only one; the 945 NEA survey respondents describe SBAC as ineffective, inefficient and exorbitant. Instead of improving schools, these mega tests drain schools of the best teachers, electives and extra-curricular programs that would instill vocations, avocations and a life-long love of learning. Further, Smarter Balanced has no external validity. According to the Academic Senate at California State University in April 2013:

“The Smarter Balanced score is not currently intended to be a placement tool vis-à-vis determining how much and what type of developmental work is needed to achieve proficiency and/or the appropriate level of credit-bearing work consistent with readiness; the Smarter Balanced score may not be reliable enough to be used for placement of this nature.”

Not to mention, the American Statistical Association says the VAM algorithm should not be used to rate teachers based on student scores, because it can be inaccurate by as much as 30%. Clearly, both VAM and SBAC are ineffective tools for demonstrating either success or accountability.

Attached is a five page summary of the NEA survey, with supporting research. A pdf of the original 50-page report is available online at: [Changing-the-Story-Transformation-toward-Fair-Accountability-and-Responsibility-in-Public-Ed](#). This represents the wisdom of 945 teachers, many from Oregon.

Thank you for sponsoring HB 2680 and other critical revisions of the ESEA. We have a mountain of primary sources and other data in support. Please call if you have you need more information or have any questions.

Thank you,

Rachel Beckley-Rich
541-554-5069
rbeckley58@gmail.com
2205 Jeppesen Acres Rd.

Eugene, OR 97401