

Chair Doherty and members of the House Education Committee,

I strongly oppose the -4 amendments.

One of the most important provisions of HB 2655 is the “Opt Out” provision.

Between December 11-13, 2006, I participated in the Oregon Achievement Standards Setting meeting (for which I got a certificate signed by Tony Alpert, who is now working for SBAC). The intention of this gathering was to revise cut scores. CTB-McGraw Hill wrote the test questions then.

What was most illuminating was learning that **some of the most difficult questions used to determine cut scores were poorly written, had more than one answer or were incorrect.** This observation came from every group, as we were divided by content and grades.

Now Oregon kids are subjected to a grand experiment. A new test touted to measure whether kids are “college and career ready.” Never mind that bright kids (like my daughter who just graduated from Whitman College) are struggling to find living wage, full-time jobs. My daughter was clearly college and career ready: a kid whose PSAT scores were one point lower than what would have qualified her as a National Merit Scholar. And she didn’t take any practice tests.

Oregon’s testing manual forbids teachers to look at the test questions.

On p. 136 of the SBAC testing manual, district staff and volunteers must agree to the following:
http://www.ode.state.or.us/wma/teachlearn/testing/admin/test_admin_manual.pdf

Specifically, district staff and volunteers agree to the following:

- No student's Secure Student Identification Number (SSID) will be used to log in to the online testing system by anyone except that student.
- The Secure Browser will be used solely for the administration of Oregon's online assessments. Any other access to Oregon's online assessments will constitute a breach of test security.
- No digital, electronic, or manual device will be used to record or communicate either item or student information.
- No behavior that could assist with student testing or distract students in a testing environment will occur. This includes discussing test items among students or staff, giving students verbal or non-verbal cues, offering an opinion on how students may have performed on a particular item or on a test as a whole.
- To the extent possible, avoid viewing any test items in the course of work.
- Uphold the security of SSIDs and all other confidential personally identifiable student data and recognize that SSIDs must not be associated with an individual student's name in an unsecured environment.
- SSID or test information cannot be associated with a student's name or other personally identifiable information unless transmission is secure (e-mail and fax are not secure).
- Do not review test items, even if a student believes they are flawed.
- I will notify the School Test Coordinator immediately (within 1 business day) upon learning of a potential impropriety or irregularity, whether it is intentional or unintentional.

DO NOT REVIEW TEST ITEMS, EVEN IF A STUDENT BELIEVES THEY ARE FLAWED?

Currently parents can exempt their child from testing *only based on disability or religion* as described in Section 4.7 of the SBAC testing manual.

4.7 Parent Requests for Exemption from State Testing

Parents may request that their student be exempted from state testing based on either *disability or religion*. OAR 581-022-1910 allows school districts to excuse students from a state required program or learning activity, including state testing, to accommodate a student's disabilities or religious beliefs. In order for a school district to excuse a student from testing under this rule, the student's parent must submit a written request to the school district, listing the reasons for the request and proposing an alternative individualized learning activity for the student that meets the same goals that would be accomplished by participation in state testing. Appropriate school personnel must evaluate and approve the parent request.

When reviewing a parent's request for exemption, school district personnel should first discuss the use of accommodations with the parent to determine whether the use of any appropriate accommodations during testing might address the parent's concerns and allow the student to participate in state testing. Students who are enrolled in school during the statewide test window who are not tested due to a parent-requested exemption must be counted as non-participants (see *Appendix H: Accessing Student Scores Online* for instructions on noting this in Student Centered Staging).

If Oregon legislators put full faith in this high stakes test, they will double down on the failures of NCLB. Fair Test^[1] explains how NCLB fails. So it will be true of these new, more difficult

high-stakes tests. Rumor has it that schools/districts will lose funding if the 95% participation threshold is not achieved. These rumors are false.

Please see this link at Fair Test^[2]: “Why You Can Boycott Standardized Tests Without Fear of Federal Penalties to Your School.”

Parents, **and high school students**, should have the right to opt out of these high stakes tests.

Kris Alman MD

[1] <http://fairtest.org/independent-test-results-show-nclb-fails>

[2] <http://www.fairtest.org/why-you-can-boycott-testing-without-fear>

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