



April 10, 2015

Chair Margaret Doherty
House Committee on Education
State Capitol Building
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2655

Dear Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee,

Chalkboard Project supports the need for maintaining a highly effective assessment system aligned with our state's education standards. We believe that system must include the use of annual summative assessments for all students in grades 3-8 and once in high school. We are concerned that provisions of HB 2655 and several of the proposed amendments, specifically those relating to "opt out" procedures, erode the important role of statewide annual assessments in measuring overall student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and holding our public education system accountable for the significant state investment in it.

Every healthy system needs an outside check to monitor progress and a statewide assessment given annually to all students (as currently required) does that. We believe that this is the cornerstone of a public accountability system that ensures that students historically underserved by public schools and who are most at risk are not forgotten or minimized. That's why we are seeing other states deciding they can no longer permit students to opt out of statewide annual assessments. They've determined that every student matters and no student should be overlooked.

Statewide assessments provide transparency and are a tool to further equity of access to quality teaching and opportunities to learn for all students. This is why we unequivocally support the continued use of annual statewide summative assessments for ALL students, because our public education system should be held accountable for each and every student.

We urge you to carefully review the impact of HB 2655 on Oregon's students, particularly historically underserved students.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sue Hildick".

Sue Hildick
President, Chalkboard Project

221 NW Second Avenue, Suite 203
Portland, Oregon 97209

voice: 503.542.4325 fax: 971.230.1274

www.chalkboardproject.org