

April 30th, 2015

To the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing to express my support for HB 2655. I am a resident of Portland, Oregon, and a math teacher at Lake Oswego High School.

First, given that these are public schools, why would any legislator want to vote against transparency for our tax-paying parents and families with respect to the purpose of the tests, the dates of the test, how the results will be used to benefit students, the sharing of test results with students' families, and the costs of the tests (both in dollars and hours taken from instructional time.)

Second, in the Oregonlive article of testimony submitted by Representative Parrish, the first "significant reason" addressed for why one-third of college students graduate in four years is because they need to take remedial math courses. As a supporter of the new national Common Core standards, I submit that they are not terribly different from our previous *Principles and Standards* authored and promoted by our National Council of Teachers of Mathematics organization. Also, the new textbooks we adopted and have begun using this year are all aligned with the Common Core standards, and though there are some differences from old texts, they are not a radical change of curriculum. Absent significant changes in those two areas, then, our state's summative assessment isn't going to be a causal factor in decreasing the average # semesters of college our students take before graduating.

Finally, I'd like to offer a comment with respect to the Chalkboard Project's primary logic in opposition to HB 2655. They argue that the bill's provision to give parents legal notice about opt-out procedures will erode the state's efforts to do good for all of our students' learning. I would hope that we all respect the wisdom of our parents to do what's best for their children. These are public schools subsidized with public dollars. If your constituents are given proper notice (as HB 2655 would require), then if the SmartBalance plans are in the best interest of our students, I'd trust that the citizens would give their informed consent. If the plans weren't, then I'd expect them not to, as should be their right as citizens and parents, in my opinion. When they argue that this testing of every student every year is "...a tool to further equity of access to quality teaching and opportunities to learn for all students", I balk at that notion. Wouldn't the requisite enormous # of dollars and hours that'd take be a better tool if used in the front-end of our educational system?

I urge you to support HB 2655.

Thank you,  
Dan Kumprey