



## Senate Education Committee

May 5, 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.

As stated in my earlier testimony on House Bill 2680, our current system of assessment is fundamentally flawed. I am here today, on behalf of OEA's 42,000 members, to support House Bill 2655 and the key role it will play in leading the way to creating a quality system of assessment for students in Oregon.

House Bill 2655 will put students in the forefront of their own learning. The primary user of assessments should be students themselves. When assessments are used correctly, students receive immediate feedback to show where they are in their learning and what they need next. *The Student Assessment Bill of Rights* will ensure that students understand why they're being assessed, how each standardized assessment will be used and how each assessment will improve their learning.

This legislation also provides parents the opportunity to make decisions in the best interest of their children about whether to participate in a summative statewide assessment. Current policy only allows parents to excuse their child for reasons of religion or disability. The standard is not applied uniformly across districts. Parents must have the ability to allow their children to show their mastery of learning in alternative ways. They need the opportunity to avoid the stress and anxiety caused by high-stakes standardized tests. We believe this legislation will help parents make informed decisions about their child's participation in statewide summative assessments and help them achieve some relief from the over-testing and over-measuring of students.

HB 2655A includes a six-year sunset to allow the legislature to revisit and revise this policy if needed in the future. While a sunset of any kind represents a significant concession and compromise from those of us who supported the original bill, six years is a sensible time period for the sunset if there must be one. Six years will allow for the completion and implementation of changes to the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, currently under way, in addition to whatever changes in policy follow the election of a new presidential administration. Six years will also give us adequate time in Oregon to allow the summative assessment redesign to take place and allow enough time to truly measure how the changes to our assessment system of working. While I was originally not a supporter of a sunset, I do support the current version of HB 2655A and urge you to pass it in its current form.

The Oregon Education Association believes that student assessment has an important role to play in evaluating and improving education in Oregon. That's why we are committed to working with school leaders, legislators, and education policy officials to help students better understand the rights and expectations related to assessments.

Finally, I want to thank you for all you do and to encourage you to use the decision-making power you have been elected to use to put education back in the hands of students, parents, and educators. OEA's 42,000 members stand ready to work with you, parents, and students to *build a better way* together. Thank you again, and I'm happy to answer any questions that you might have.