

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to beg you to pass SB 428 with Amendment -1 and finally do a complete and thorough audit of the current state assessment system and its effects on our schools.

The previous audit did not begin to get near the problem with this system. No district, teacher, family, or student input were included.

I taught for 30 years retiring last June, mostly in Title I schools, mostly in bilingual programs. The chief reasons I object to the current assessment system are: it overwhelms every other activity in the elementary school for months at a time, becoming the complete focus; the Smarter Balanced Assessment in particular is an inappropriate assessment for so many children and does nothing but demoralize them and turn them off to school; the inappropriate focus on test scores has caused loss of time in physical activity, the arts, and other untested content areas; the assessments are linguistically biased; all of these assessments and data tracking cost a whole lot of money.

We are getting nothing of value for that money but “compliance” and very broad data that does nothing to advance the learning of individual children.

We already know that under resourced children, families, schools, and communities need more resources. Assessments are a poor substitute for actual justice. Let's get resources to the people and places that need them and stop wasting resources measuring what we already know is true.

I know you have heard from the public that there is a problem with our assessment system. Please help us get to the bottom of it so we can fix it. Please vote yes on SB 428 Amendment -1.

Kathleen Jeskey  
Canby