

To the Senate Committee On Education~~

I applaud our Oregon legislature for considering SB 702, and it is my hope that its passage will be the first step in bringing back a more wholesome curriculum to our public educational system. It is long overdue!

Over 20 years now, Social Studies curriculums throughout Oregon and our nation have been diminished or eliminated to make way for an increase in standardized testing. As a substitute teacher in grades K-12, I watched, with great trepidation, this disheartening transition take place. I remember teaching second graders a Social Studies lesson regarding the importance of community and diversity. The children responded with great interest. Eighth graders learned the importance of taxes and how they strengthen our public services like the police and fire departments, our libraries, parks, roads and bridges, and yes, our public schools. I remember asking them which one of these services they would want eliminated. It was truly an enlightening lesson. And at the high school level, guest speakers from the County Clerk, City Counselors and Commissioners would tell of their responsibilities to the community.

Two generations of our children have been deprived of vital information that builds stronger, more sustainable communities and develops a more knowledgeable base of informed voters. I have to wonder if many of the societal conflicts we are experiencing today throughout our nation could have been minimized if we had retained a strong Social Studies/Civics curriculum.

Your support for SB 702 is vital in many, many ways!!

Thank you!