

April 1, 2021

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thompson and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

Members of the Oregon Public Education Network (OPEN) urge your support for SB 602, the removal of the sunset on the Student Assessment Bill of Rights.

We believe that the right for parents, guardians and “adult students” to opt-out of state-mandated standardized testing is of great importance. It is an issue of justice, equity and fundamental rights.

Opting out of excessive standardized testing is the only available way for parents and students to prevent some of the harms that result from such testing. Among the most egregious of harms is the sorting, labeling and tracking of students based on arbitrary scores created by distant testing corporations.

In itself, exercising the right to opt out cannot mitigate the loss of a well-rounded education as state, federal and district-level testing marginalizes the arts, humanities and even recess in our schools. We live in a time in which the school day is dominated by teaching to the tests.

Beyond protecting individual students from the indignities and inequities of taking state-mandated summative tests, opting out delivers a collective message of disapproval and resistance to the ODE and the federal government.

In the end, SB 602 provides the only way that parents, guardians and adult students have to say “No” to the powerful forces of the testing industry and the testing lobby. OPEN is not anti-testing. Assessment is part and parcel of all instruction. However, we firmly oppose excessive standardized testing

SB 602 is deeply democratic and just. Please support SB 602 and allow the Student Assessment Bill of Rights to continue to be accessible into the future.

Respectfully,

Members of the OPEN Steering Committee

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