

Members of the Senate Education Committee

I am writing in support of SB 596, commonly referred to as the "Too Young To Test" bill.

I recall when there was a federal bi-partisan effort to improve school performance by tying funding incentives to test scores that evaluated how students were meeting measurable standards. It seemed like a good idea at the time—let's help schools do better. What could go wrong with good intentions like that? After all, teaching to the test was not a new idea.

A lot has happened in twenty plus years of the "teach to the test" movement. But on the whole, from where I sit it appears that teaching to the test has become the end goal of public education. The best example in Oregon is requiring pre-kindergarten to 2nd grade children to be involved in standardized tests promoted by large private sector corporations.

I am a retired registered nurse and have no relationship to any education group or professional lobby effort. I am writing as a concerned citizen who believes there is a point at which too much of a sometimes-useful-tool can become harmful. I believe routine standardized testing of all little kids is exactly that—a harmful (and expensive) exercise. And you should prohibit it.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Chris O'Neill, RN, Ret. Eugene, Oregon