

To: Members of the Senate Education Committee  
Fr: Jesse Cox  
Dt: 4 April 2021  
Re: SB596, "Too Young To Test"

I urge the passage of SB596, "Too Young To Test." I am an affiliated member of Community Alliance for Public Education, Oregon Public Education Network and Network for Public Education.

The stakes for quality of life, success and the Pursuit of Happiness are very high and while a kid may not be able to imagine the responsibilities and rewards of a mature political voice, proper health-care and education, jobs and careers, creditworthiness, independent living and a stable home, imagine the emotions of a child of 4-7 years of age who doesn't know yet what is the proper domain of the world and what is properly inside their hearts, minds and souls. Kids know enough to know they have failed and to incorporate that into their self-consciousness, even if they don't make the distinction between that and having been let down by others, or of having been set up to fail because this particular kind of personally weakening and ruinous scholastic failure incrementally and cavalierly enriches others, impersonal drip by indifferent drop multiplied across populations of millions.

Kids move from internalization of failure to life-forming shame-stigma and in measuring themselves against those they perceive as successful -- fictions like advertising, film, fashion, the mall, etc. -- they want to punish and hurt themselves, further suppressing the now present child and future citizen. Futility becomes familiar and conspicuous corruption becomes self-evidently a socially acceptable way out.

As seen across the decades, robbing children of the joy of learning, deprofessionalizing the vocation of teaching (robbing teachers of the joy of teaching), dumbing down curricula and teaching to the test, are slow boats to perdition, or in a completely different metaphor as seen in the moment, a breathtaking race to the bottom, and if suicide ideation is never effected at the tender age of 4-7 (*which is not the case*) then certainly for many older people the formative years of K-2 had set the stage. Deregulated education is not an educational model. It is akin to empire, slavery and piracy. As a legalistic algorithm, the deregulation of education is a single strand of the fabric of the dominance of humans by artificial intelligence that we have feared for over a century since early 20<sup>th</sup> Century writers such as George Orwell began to describe the banality of the modern assault on democracy and reason. It's not the robots. It's errant, rampant corporations that need to be restrained.