

April 3, 2023

Re: House Bill 3198

To: Honorary Members of the House Education Committee:

Please let me explain why I am taking a neutral position. I am incredibly thankful that you are seeing the importance of our children learning to read, but more importantly to love reading, exploring and discovering our world through books and other literary sources. However, I am concerned with the programs that might be generated from the passage of this crucial legislation.

Having been a substitute teacher and tutor for all grade levels from kindergarten through 12th grade, I worked with every age group and learned that not all students learn the same way at the same time. There was a banner in one of the elementary schools where I taught that stated: "All children have gifts; they just open them at different times." Please, we should not adopt a curriculum that is a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Our teachers need to have a variety of ways to reach their students. And please, do not rely on for-profit companies who focus on data collection and feel that a standardized test is the answer. We have used this approach far too long to the detriment of too many of our children. I will never forget two kindergarteners coming to me almost ten years ago now and saying how much they hate school. Kindergarten should be a time when our children learn to "love learning." We have continued the same approach since, and too many students have "fallen through the cracks." It is time to focus on ways that will bring our children back to "love learning" and thrive.

Thank you for caring,

Liz Marlia-Stein
McMinnville