

Good morning, Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Dobson & McIntire and members of the House Education Committee! My name is Liz Marlia-Stein, and I live in McMinnville and have taught and tutored students from kindergarten through 12th grade for over 25 years. Thank you for bringing Senate Bill 1596 up for discussion today. It is my belief that allowing our teachers to use a play-based approach to their instruction will make a difference in our students' attitude toward learning, their mental & emotional well-being and their desire to attend our public schools.

For nearly 30 years, we have seen a steady decline in attendance--families choosing private schools, homeschooling, and company-sponsored online learning. As our public schools began focusing on the need for our children to succeed through standardized testing, I noticed students becoming disengaged and in high school, many would skip classes and even drop out, and it was these students who I tutored in order for them to succeed. Children in kindergarten experienced a curriculum that was no longer developmentally appropriate, and eventually I saw a rise in disruptive behavior and bullying. Of course there were some children who thrived, but there were too many who did not. Offering lessons that will build up their self-esteem and encourage them to interact with one another and problem-solve together is what play-based learning will offer them. I believe that even our teachers will be happier.

Please take time to read the many testimonies that have been submitted. Each of those in support will give you a clearer understanding of what SB 1596 can bring to our public-school children and educators. It is very exciting, I promise! Thank you so much.

Liz Marlia-Stein
1525 NE 18th Street
McMinnville, OR 97128