

Testimony to Oregon State Board of Education
Re: Proposed Modification to OAR 581-022-1910

Lisa A. Shultz
22 October, 2015

Members of the State Board of Education:

My name is Lisa Shultz. I am resident of Washington County and a former member of the Beaverton School Board. I am here today to comment on the proposed change to OAR 581-022-1910 resulting from passage of HB 2655 Section 3 know as the Student Assessment Bill of Rights.

The proposal as listed in your agenda materials seeks to limit the requirements outlined by the bill to the Smarter Balanced Assessments. I urge you to reject this limitation and implement the Student Assessment Bill of Rights as intended by the legislature. The bill clearly defines the scope of assessments that the bill should cover:

SECTION 3 (1)(c) “Statewide summative assessment” means a standardized summative assessment that is identified by the Department of Education for administration in all of the school districts and public charter schools of this state.” The legislature had the ability to limit the scope of the bill to just the SBAC as they did in HB 2713, but they did not.

Including all statewide summative assessments is important for reasons of equity and fairness to all students. I call your attention to the testimony of Imelda Cortez, Eugene parent and teacher. Ms. Cortez rightly points out that HB 2655 creates a more equitable system for parents needing to advocate for their children because not all parents have the education or tools necessary to successfully opt their children out of an assessment that is not appropriate for their child. HB 2655 seeks to establish parents as partners in their children’s education instead of merely expecting blind compliance to a system that may not be in the best interest of their child, or may even be harmful. Parents with concerns about the Kindergarten Assessment (KA) this school year have asked districts about the procedure to opt their child out. Because of the delay in implementing HB 2655, parents were told they had to continue to use the Oregon rule requiring a religious or medical reason. However, parents are expecting HB2655 to include the KA and since there is no question the KA is being used by State as a summative assessment and should be included in the scope of assessments outlined in HB 2655. Sound statistical sampling methodologies do not require that every student participate. In the unlikely event that a large enough percentage of students are opting out of an assessment, it should prompt an investigation of the appropriateness and validity of the assessment.

Parents absolutely have both the right and the moral obligation to act in the best interest of their children. The right to opt out is not in question. What is in question is the procedure by which they do so, and HB 2655 sets a fair and equitable system for all parents. Parents don’t deviate from the standard school program unless there is a compelling need to do so. I urge you again to honor the intent of the legislation and include ALL statewide summative assessments the in Student Assessment Bill of Rights.

Sincerely,
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