

April 5, 2021

Members of the Senate Education Committee,

The dramatic and harmful changes we have seen in early childhood education must be addressed. SB 596 does that.

Standardized testing in the early grades is out of control. In Eugene District 4j, K-2 students have to take 46 standardized assessments. In El Camino del Rio dual-language school, K-2 students have to take 78 standardized assessments. This is madness.

Excessive testing is sidelining all that we have learned about developmentally-appropriate best practices. The joy of learning and creativity is being replaced by a lockstep overemphasis on reading, writing and arithmetic.

These are little children. They are not test scores or data-collection points. We have truly lost our way.

The responsibility for this begins at the top, including the legislature's obsession with "accountability" as the price that must be exacted in exchange for decent school funding. This tragic trend continued with the emphasis on 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading scores in exchange for the early childhood parts of the Student Success Act, thereby placing grades 3 and below in a pressure cooker to meet standardized test scores.

The ODE has served as the enforcer of this data-driven model of education and has provided no ethical leadership in pushing back against these extreme measures. They have not stood up to defend the well-proven best practices of developmentally-appropriate, humane, enriching and healthy education.

Please have the courage to defend these young children. Trust teachers to decide how best to assess learning in their classrooms. Please support SB 596.

Respectfully,

Roscoe Caron  
Retired middle school teacher  
Member, Community Alliance for Public Education (CAPE)  
Member, Oregon Public Education Network (OPEN)