

SB 596 - Too Young to Test
Written Testimony in Support: Diana Huntington

To whom It May Concern:

I am a retired teacher with over 20 years of experience with K-12 students. I am in full support of SB 596, which would prohibit the state of Oregon and local school districts from administering standardized tests to students from pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade.

I support this bill for many reasons based on my many years experience with these young students as well as my education, which includes an MA in Teaching and an MA in Library Science.

Repeated standardized testing leads to over-emphasizing testing subjects, which in turn leads to under-emphasizing more developmentally appropriate subjects for these very young students. Teachers are forced to narrow the curriculum in order to “teach to the test”, leaving little time for such important qualities as creativity and divergent thinking, as well as for learning social and communications skills which are so important for beginning students. Instead of fostering a positive school experience, these tests cause anxiety and stress.

Other states have passed similar laws that prohibit the administration of standardized tests to students below the 3rd grade except for purely diagnostic purposes, which would also be allowed in SB 596. Also, under SB 596, teachers will still be allowed to select and administer assessments in their individual classroom.

I urge you to pass this “Too Young to Test” bill in order to protect our youngest Oregonians and to let teachers do what they are trained to do in ways that they consider to be most advantageous for their students.

Respectfully,

Diana Huntington
Eugene