

Dear Education Committee members,
Please support and pass SB 744

Oregon's students deserve better than this barrier to success. They are subjected to far too much testing in the course of their schooling, and this is unnecessary. I am a former librarian and Secondary English Language Arts teacher, and have witnessed the damage done to students' hunger for authentic learning by the testing culture that has overwhelmed our school systems. This is especially true of high stakes testing.

At a time when the leading cause of death for young Oregonian ages 10-24 is suicide (Oregon Healthy Teen Survey 2019) the last thing we should be doing to our kids is increasing their stress and fears by tying graduation to testing.

- * Oregon is one of only 11 states that still have a testing requirement for graduation.
- * Such testing requirements increase the dropout rate, especially among low- income students, English language learners and students of color.
- * These tests take an inordinate amount of school counselor time away from counseling by necessitating unnecessary testing coordination.
- * These testing requirements force teachers to teach to the test, rather than engaging students in authentic and meaningful learning.
- * Many studies show that such requirements do nothing to raise achievement, improve employment prospects or ensure college success.
- * In the past few years, eighteen states have ended such testing requirements.
- * Seven states have also granted retroactive high school diplomas to students who were denied them based on test scores.

Thank you
Darcy Bedortha, MS, MA