

Members of the House Education Committee,

HB 4124, the “When is Testing Too Much?” bill is long overdue. It’s been 20 years since Oregon’s students, teachers and parents have experienced excessive standardized testing. Perhaps most egregious is the explosion of early childhood standardized testing in the past 8 years.

Parents have little or no idea of the extent of all of the district-mandated, state-mandated and federally-mandated testing. Furthermore, taxpayers have no idea how much money is being spent on test purchasing, nor the time spent in preparing for, administering, data gathering and data interpretation based on these tests.

The public certainly has no idea either about the emotional price exacted through the constant testing-sorting and tracking of students, nor the price to all of us of losing creative, passionate and innovative teachers due to their marginalization as the instructional leaders in their own classrooms. The pressure to teach to the test and the resulting narrowing of the curriculum to diminish arts, humanities, social studies and civics is unknown to the public.

This model is a failure. Members of the House Education Committee, we have lost our way. We cannot find our way out of the damage created by this failed model until we understand its scope and cost.

Thus, HB 4124 is an opportunity to begin an honest and informed discussion about “When is Testing Too Much?”

Please pass this bill in your committee and please advocate strongly for it in the House.

Sincerely,

Members of the Oregon Public Education Network (OPEN) Steering Committee:

Margi Brown
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David Crandall
Scott Hayes
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Kathleen Jeskey
Larry Lewin
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