

Members of the Senate Education Committee,

In my 33 years as an elementary classroom teacher, I have observed all kinds of students. Here is what I know: When students are engaged and enjoying the process of learning, they are amazingly capable of learning all manner of things. The joy of learning is palpable and is contagious. Yes, learning is work, but learning can be joyful.

In the past 20 years, as public education has become increasingly focused on standardized testing and data-collecting, I have seen the steady degradation of the experience of learning for young children. It has become increasingly joyless. It has become increasingly routinized and depersonalized. It has become increasingly rote and boring. It has become increasingly damaging to students' self-confidence. It has become less humane and well-rounded. It has become increasingly divorced from the experience of learning as an adventure of discovery. I believe the lack of projects, hands-on science, and time to play is a leading cause for disruptive behavior. We need to make play and creativity an important part of school, especially while the children are young.

SB 948, the "Play-Based Learning" bill, is an attempt to acknowledge that we have lost our way and have gone down a path of "accountability" that has done great damage – especially to the youngest of our children – by removing much of the joy of learning.

It is time for us to course correct. SB 948 is much needed and is deserving of your support.

For the sake of our children, please support SB 948, the "Play-Based Learning" bill.

Sincerely,

Eva LaMar  
Eugene, Oregon