

February 1, 2019

Dear Esteemed Members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Megan Smith and I am writing to you today in support of House Bill 2318 (“Too Young to Test”). I am the president of the Wy’East Education Association as well as a teacher in Boring, Oregon, with 28 first graders students in my class. I recently completed my mid-year assessments and am in the process of entering grades for report cards. While I appreciate the data I receive from these assessments, I cannot imagine subjecting my students to additional standardized testing. Not only is this undue pressure developmentally inappropriate, it also destroys my students’ love of learning and confidence in their own growth and self-worth. As testing increases, I see unnecessary stress and anxiety building in these future leaders.

Standardized testing notoriously fails to take into account the simple fact that children learn at different rates. Just as each child gets taller at his or her own pace, skills such as reading, writing, and computation fluency develop at their own pace as well. Standardized testing also disproportionately impacts students from lower-income families and is deeply prejudicial against students of color.

House Bill 2318 is a rational argument in opposition to standardized testing:

- The state of Oregon and local school districts would be prohibited from administering standardized tests to students from pre-kindergarten through second grade.
- Teachers would be allowed to select and administer assessments in their classrooms in accordance with their professional judgment.
- Standardized assessments would be allowed for purely diagnostic purposes as required by state or federal law.

New York and New Jersey have already passed similar legislation prohibiting the administration of standardized tests (other than diagnostic) to students below third grade. Their students are able to focus on creative, critical thinking and transdisciplinary learning rather than answering narrowly focused, single-subject assessments.

I am confident that you will make the best choice for our students to ensure they have the opportunities to learn and grow at their own pace and under the professional guidance of the highly qualified educators across our great state.

Thank you sincerely for your time and devotion to our students,

Megan Smith
President, Wy’East Education Association