

Members of the Education Committee:

The repeated standardized testing, sorting and tracking of young children is developmentally inappropriate. Testing, sorting and tracking of young children fails to acknowledge that young children learn at different rates, in different ways and at different times. Young children should be exploring their environment, developing their senses, and learning to make friends with their classmates instead of focusing on tests.

Extending the “Testing, Sorting, and Tracking” impact of standardized testing to young children is deeply prejudicial against low-income students and students of color. Also, the repeated standardized testing of young children forces teachers to narrow the curriculum in order to “teach to the test”. That leaves less time to truly individualize instruction and provide exploration opportunities for kids.

The pressure to over-emphasize tested subjects results in young children spending more and more of their day in “set time” focused on tested subjects, which is developmentally inappropriate. Data-driven education and the primacy of ranking young children ignores their other important qualities such as creativity and divergent thinking. Students should be developing spatial, musical, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligences in addition to linguistic and math skills. Those are not measured by tests given to very young children. Subjecting young children to repeated standardized testing and tracking causes unnecessary stress and anxiety, leaving many children feeling inadequate. Ideally, early learners should be exploring their world and finding their strengths, not taking tests to appease a data-driven agenda.

HB 2318 (“Too Young to Test”) would:

- *Prohibit the state of Oregon and local school districts from administering standardized tests to students from pre-kindergarten through grade two.*
 - *Teachers will still be allowed to select and administer assessments in individual classrooms in accordance with their professional judgment.*
 - *Standardized assessments will be allowed for purely diagnostic purposes as required by state or federal law.*

Please pass HB 2318 to give Oregon’s kids a better start at school.

Deb Mayer
Retired teacher