

# HB 4124 K-12 Testing audit – Floor speech

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Oregon's 197 school districts administer a wide range of tests, or assessments, to measure individual student progress and the quality of the instructional system. Each district has different practices. Some of the testing is useful in identifying student's progress or need for additional help, but some tests are redundant or have questionable value on assessing progress.

Standardized commercial testing is useful, but when is it too much?

For years, I've been hearing from teachers, counselors, and parents saying enough is enough. Telling me about their significant concerns related to testing: the time it takes away from classroom learning and recess. Time spent planning for testing and giving make-up tests. Stress and anxiety on students. And wasted effort.

Still, we know that some tests – the "formative tests" – do a good job of helping to identify students' progress, need for additional help in specific areas, and barriers to reading and learning, such as dyslexia.

The goal is to have a balanced assessment system, where the right assessment is being used for the right purpose.

And there's another problem that we've heard about as we were digging into this: when a student moves between school districts, teachers usually receive little assessment data from the previous school that would help inform instruction and progress, compelling teachers to re-test new students.

So here's what we aim to achieve through this bill:

1. Get objective data on non-state-mandated tests: how much testing is done, for what purpose, and at what cost, so policymakers can develop a more effective testing strategy. With that information, legislators can review testing policies and ODE can give guidance on best practices, to reduce unnecessary and less useful testing)

These district-level academic assessments are things like school district universal screeners, progress monitors, and interim assessments systems.

2. And to help counselors and teachers access assessments for new students more easily: We hope to clarify, with better guidance and communication, how student test information should be shared from one school to another, so teachers at the student's new school can get full assessment information from the old school.

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## Closing

I'd like to thank my Chief Sponsors, Representative Weber who has generously lent her time and experience as an educator to guiding the policy and Senator Frederick, who has tirelessly advocated for better testing practices.

David C. Berliner, Regents' Professor Emeritus, Arizona State University, Member, National Academy of Education, and Past President of the American Educational Research Association says that "Almost all the information obtained from any one year of testing at the school level is duplicated in the next two years of testing. Testing every third year would provide almost all the

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information citizens want to know about their schools' performance, and if they want to know how their children are doing, they should ask the child's teacher."

I recently heard from Mary Leighton, who says "As a longtime educator and educational researcher, I can support the claim that frequent high-stakes testing simply confirms what every teacher knows: the best-resourced kids always score high. The tests are not good measures of school productivity, and administering them takes precious time from teaching and learning, not to mention the stress for teachers and students."

Let's listen to our teachers and parents who've been asking us for years to do something about *more and more and more* testing of our K-12 students. We start here, by getting the information we need to guide meaningful change for the future.