

MULTNOMAH COUNTY DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE
Cost Benefit Audit of High Stakes Standardized Testing
Resolution: 2017-4

WHEREAS, Oregon's future well-being relies on a high-quality public education system that prepares all students for citizenship, careers, and lifelong learning, as well as strengthens the state's social and economic prosperity; and,

WHEREAS, Oregon is spending burgeoning amounts of money, time, and energy on standardized tests to measure student performance and using those test results to make major decisions affecting individual students, educators, and schools; and,

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that high-stakes standardized testing is an inadequate, and in the case of Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) tests, an unreliable and invalid measure of student learning, educator effectiveness, and school success; and,

WHEREAS, high-stakes standardized testing does not inform instructional practice, nor does it convey meaningful information to students or parents about student progress, but does exert undue mental and emotional stress on them, and,

WHEREAS, the state collects, stores, and analyzes data gleaned from the tests to make decisions that can have major impacts on students' lives, the hiring and firing of school personnel, and school closings; and,

WHEREAS, the cost of maintaining the Statewide Longitudinal Data System that accompanies the tests is not only costly, but grows steadily as more and more testing data is collected, stored, and analyzed; and,

WHEREAS, Oregon state-mandated standardized testing costs from 2010 through 2014 are estimated to have been at least \$414 million dollars; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Oregon is facing a substantial budget deficit of \$1.7 billion dollars which most likely will force school districts to take drastic actions (e.g. laying off staff, increasing class sizes, cutting back on school days); and,

WHEREAS, it appears that the Federal Government is going to turn over more control to the states, so more time is needed for Oregon to review and/or develop an effective testing system.

THEREFORE, be it that the Multnomah County Democratic Party resolves to support cost effective assessments in Oregon's public schools that benefit students, educators and schools, by:

SUSPENDING, the use of the statewide assessments developed by a multi-state consortium and postponing the renewal of any contracts or Memoranda of Understanding related to the use of statewide assessments.

SUPPORTING, Senate Bill SB 351, directing the Secretary of State to conduct a thorough cost benefit audit related to the use of the statewide summative assessments in Oregon public schools.

Resolution submitted by the Education Study Group of the Multnomah Democrats Platform Committee.

ADOPTED by the Multnomah County Democratic Party on ____ day of _____, _____.