



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT: Becca Uherbelau  
503-495-2119

NEWS RELEASE  
May 9, 2014

## **Oregon Educators Call for Moratorium on New High-Stakes Tests**

Portland, OR – At the recent 2014 OEA Representative Assembly (OEA-RA), members of the Oregon Education Association (OEA) took a strong stand on behalf of their students and against the overuse of new high-stakes, standardized tests. The OEA-RA is the largest deliberative body of professional educators in Oregon, averaging more than 600 member-delegates each year. Every year, delegates, who are elected by members across the state, debate and decide upon policy that guides the organization.

“Oregon educators have made it very clear: our students deserve better,” said Hanna Vaandering, OEA President. “Parents and teachers strive for each and every student to meet the highest expectations for learning. We make this much harder on our kids when the name of the game is more high-stakes testing. Instead, we need to invest the time, resources and money to ensure student success.”

At the OEA-RA, educators demanded a moratorium on the Smarter Balanced Assessment, the state’s new high-stakes test. Educators want to ensure that the new state assessment accurately measures student learning and that appropriate modifications be made prior to rolling out any new assessments in Oregon classrooms.

Vaandering continues, “Oregon is moving forward with a new unproven, high stakes standardized test – Smarter Balanced – as soon as next Spring. When the timeline doesn’t allow for giving 100% to preparing our students, none of us should be surprised by the prediction that 65 percent of all students will fail the first test. This makes absolutely no sense. Why would we spend millions of dollars on a test that students are predicted to fail?”

“Educators are standing up for their students and the schools they deserve,” Vaandering said. “Students need their teachers to be empowered and have the time to challenge and support them in meeting the demands of new high academic standards. With the rush to implement new standards, we’re simply missing an opportunity to do what’s best for our students. Oregon students get one shot at a quality education and for that we have to be in this for the long haul.”

Educators across Oregon have expressed their need for time, tools and resources to gain a deep understanding of the new Common Core Standards, assess their appropriateness, collaborate with colleagues, work with parents and adjust their curriculum, lesson plans and classroom instruction to ensure students are successful.

(cont.)

Educators also approved items to:

- Work with parents and education stakeholders to determine appropriate use of assessment,
- Publicly invite Oregon legislators and every elected and appointed education public official to take the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium test,
- Call for congressional hearings on the misuse and abuse of standardized testing,
- Ask that testing programs originate from or be approved by licensed educators instead of from the for-profit testing industry.

The OEA is proud to be engaged in a joint effort with the Chief Education Officer Nancy Golden in proposing a more balanced and effective system of assessments for Oregon students. The work group, which includes 16 OEA member educators, is currently developing a proposal that outlines an assessment system that best supports student learning and is meaningful to educators.

###