

Senate Education

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SB26-068 Modify Administration of Education Assessments

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Jim Fraley For himself	<p>As District Superintendent in Yuma CO, I am deeply invested in the success and well-being of our students. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 26-068. This legislation addresses a critical need in our K-12 system: the requirement to ensure that standardized summative assessments are administered to students to the minimum extent possible. In my 30+ years as a classroom instructor, school principal, and district leader, I have one regret. I didn't advocate for the students and against state/federal standardized assessments. Countless hours and money wasted on these assessments that do very little for student growth and achievement, which could have been spent immersed in high leverage learning and teaching practices. The current iteration of the Colorado Measure of Academic Success (CMAS) has become a barrier rather than a bridge to student achievement. Under the current "mandate," our district faces several systemic challenges that this bill seeks to rectify:</p> <p>Erosion of Instruction Time: The sheer volume of hours dedicated to the administration of these assessments and the weeks of preparation leading up to them diverts our most valuable instruction time away from the classroom. Unreliable and Stale Data: By the time results reach our educators, the data is no longer timely. It reflects a snapshot of past performance rather than a roadmap for the future, failing to demonstrate student readiness for learning at the next phase of their K-12 journey. Loss of Localized Control: Standardization often ignores the unique needs of our specific student populations. We need a system that allows for the use of data that aligns with instruction at the local level, rather than a top-down, one-size-fits-all "mandate" that is really not mandated for all students. Fiscal Burden: The high cost of these assessments, both in direct dollars and human resources, is increasingly difficult to justify when compared to the minimal diagnostic value they provide to our teachers and families. SB 26-068 provides a common-sense path</p>

	<p>forward by directing the Department of Education to apply for a federal waiver for federal assessment requirements where necessary. I urge you to support this bill to reduce the testing burden on our children and restore the focus to what matters most: high-quality, localized and impactful instruction and assessments meant for learning.</p>
<p>Deanna Hathorne Amend themselves</p>	<p>Colorado Senate Bill 26-068 proposes an important step toward improving Colorado’s assessment system by reducing unnecessary testing that can create stress for students and additional costs for school districts. Many students already experience significant pressure from frequent standardized exams, which can take time away from meaningful learning and classroom instruction. By amending testing requirements, the bill would allow schools to focus more on teaching and student growth rather than repeated assessments, while also helping districts save money that could be reinvested into classroom resources, teachers, and student support programs. Updating the state’s testing policies in this way would support a healthier learning environment while still maintaining accountability for student achievement. As a fifth grade teachers, my students take Language Arts CMAS for 90 minutes, for 3 days in a row, math for 65 minutes for 3 days and science for 65 minutes for 3 days. In total this is 660 minutes of total testing, or 11 hours of classroom time for testing. The preparation for testing each day adds about 30 minutes of time (kids can't leave the room, so bathroom all at once, making sure materials are secured etc.) so that's another 270 minutes or 4.5 hours making total testing time more like 15.5 hours for ten year olds. It's increasingly more stressful every year as middle schools use these tests for placement in honors class and our students put a lot of pressure on themselves to do well. We spend a full week the week before cmas preparing for it as well, and the week after cmas, our district uses iredy end of year tests which take another week. It all amounts to the month of April being all about testing, not teaching and learning. We have less time to read books, write meaningful pieces, learn more math and engage in class discussions. Please consider amending this bill, lowering the amount of testing per student in the state of Colorado.</p>
<p>Lynne Popkowski For</p>	<p>I am a retired public school Special Education teacher with 30 years experience in Littleton, Denver and Douglas County schools.</p>

<p>themselves</p>	<p>Standardized, timed academic tests are anathema to students with auditory processing, attention and memory weaknesses. The majority of students on my caseload had deficits in those areas. Those deficits had to be carefully reflected and tied to test results on their IEPs (Individualized Education Plan) along with appropriate modifications. Modifications included extended time, quiet area, timely breaks, etc. Even with modifications students struggled and sometimes just gave up even though they were giving it their all.</p> <p>And what of those students who didn't qualify for Special Education services but had minor weaknesses in those areas?</p> <p>Do these tests truly measure knowledge and skill or do they measure speed, attention and memory?</p> <p>I hope to see changes in how students are assessed that will reflect true learning.</p>
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