

IN THE SENATE

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 106

BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND STATING POLICY OF THE STATE OF IDAHO REGARDING THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TESTING AND FOR TEACHER AND STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY, STATING THE POLICY OF THE STATE OF IDAHO REGARDING THE LENGTH OF TESTING TIME, AND DIRECTING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PRESENT SUITABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT CONSORTIUM TO THE LEGISLATURE.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

WHEREAS, testing is an important activity in an education system to formulate instruction, to hold students accountable for learning, and to provide a tool to compare the efficacy of different education systems; and

WHEREAS, overtesting and poorly designed tests can be detrimental to student learning; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and taxpayers that the proper quantity and type of tests be administered; and

WHEREAS, the proper balance between testing and learning is critical; and

WHEREAS, there are at least three major reasons to test: to help formulate instruction, create accountability for learning and teaching, and, finally, systems accountability; and

WHEREAS, testing needs to be done in a way that creates the least amount of instructional disruption and cost; and

WHEREAS, the best tests are designed and used for multiple purposes, to create feedback to students and parents, to help teachers see what students have learned or have not learned, and used by the principal to see where support of teaching is needed; and

WHEREAS, each category of testing is best designed and administered by different entities, formative tests by local teachers and districts, student accountability tests by teacher or local districts, teacher accountability by the school district such as end-of-course assessments, and comparability between education systems in different states by out-of-state entities; and

WHEREAS, a clear vision of the future of testing would help the State of Idaho create policy, improve student learning outcomes and save tax dollars; and

WHEREAS, a state-to-state comparison test delivers more accurate results if the state education system does not test itself, a third-party evaluation is best; however, a state-to-state comparison test does not need to be given to each student each year, all that is required is a statistically large, random sample of students who take the test; and

WHEREAS, there are other tests being used by other states to fulfill the ESEA waiver other than the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular
2 Session of the Sixty-third Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of
3 Representatives concurring therein, that it is the policy of the State of
4 Idaho that the choice, selection and administration of formative tests be
5 the responsibility of the local school districts, trustees, administrators
6 and teachers.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the responsibility for student account-
8 ability test/quizzes be chosen, selected and/or created and be administered
9 under the direction of local school boards, superintendents, teachers and
10 principals and that this does not prohibit a local school district from
11 choosing tests created by entities outside the school district or state.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that teacher accountability should take place at
13 the district level under district control and if the State of Idaho provides
14 end-of-course assessments, the local school district can decide if they
15 should be used for teacher accountability.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that statewide assessments of student learning
17 be less than three hours in length per student per year in elementary school,
18 recognizing that some students require accommodations that may require more
19 time, and be less than four and one-half hours per student per year in sec-
20 ondary school, and that statewide assessments of student learning be used
21 by the state mainly for policy consideration and that local school districts
22 may use the data for other purposes.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the SBAC test or the Idaho Standards
24 Achievement Test 2.0 (ISAT) is probably a poor fit for the State of Idaho
25 because of its length and cost, that the State Department of Education is di-
26 rected to present suitable alternatives to the SBAC to the Legislature which
27 could be used by the state in the 2016 spring testing window and report to the
28 Legislature by January 15, 2016, about the feasibility of using a different
29 test, and that this alternative test must have reading, math and writing
30 components.