

Vote Record

Senate Committee on Education

Date: 4/28/99
 Moved by: Lazich Seconded by: Erpenbach
 AB: _____ Clearinghouse Rule: _____
 AB: _____ Appointment: _____
 AJR: _____ SR: _____ Other: _____
 A: _____

A/S Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Amdt: _____
 A/S Sub Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Sub Amdt: _____
 A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Amdt: _____ to A/S Sub Amdt: _____

Be recommended for:

- Passage
- Introduction
- Adoption
- Rejection

- Indefinite Postponement
- Tabling
- Concurrence
- Nonconcurrence
- Confirmation

Committee Member

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Sen. Richard Grobschmidt, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Robert Jauch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Kevin Shibilski	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Jim Baumgart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Judy Robson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Jon Erpenbach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Alberta Darling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Carol Roessler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Joanne Huelsman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Mary Lazich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Margaret Farrow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Totals: 11 0 _____ _____

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

SB 98

Senate Education Committee Hearing

April 28, 1999

My name is Janet Kane. I'm a member of the Middleton/Cross Plains Area Board of Education, just elected to my second term. Besides being a school board member, I also have a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology. Over the last 25 years I have used and developed many assessments and evaluated numerous educational programs. Some people have questioned why the state graduation exam would have to be at least 12 hours long while the ACT or SAT can be completed in a morning. Several differences come to mind. Both the ACT and the SAT assess a relatively narrow set of skills known to be related to college success. In contrast, the state graduation test must cover all the state standards that can be assessed by a paper and pencil test. Another difference is that the ACT and SAT are optional, while the graduation test will be required. (A college may require applicants to take the ACT or SAT, but the student chooses to apply to that college. Requiring all students to pass a test in order to receive their high school diploma is a very different situation.) Thirdly, no decision is made solely on the basis of one ACT or SAT score. College admission offices also consider courses taken, high school grades, class rank, extracurricular activities, teacher recommendations, and student essays.

I've listened to the testimony on SB 98 as well as the questions and comments of the members of this committee. Let me assure you that what DPI is doing is very much in line with professional standards and what has been done in other states that have adopted a graduation exam. I hear the concern about a test that's 12 hours long and takes up 4 days of school. I'd add, though, that "*You ain't seen nothing yet*". First, with high stakes tests, new businesses will spring up to market test preparation materials and courses to families. Second, testing dates and times will have to be coordinated statewide to prevent cheating. If the testing dates differ, students who take the test early could send information about the test content to students in areas tested later. This has happened in other states. Third, we'll have to impose security measures to prevent cheating and to assure the identity of test takers. Research documents that as the stakes increase, cheating increases.

I sincerely thank this committee for its strong support for SB 98. Special thanks to the previous chair, Senator Alberta Darling, who started the process, and Senator Rick Grobschmidt, who has assembled the concerns of parents and educators throughout the state into a sensible bill. I appreciate the committee members' willingness and dedication to change current law as soon as possible. I know that each of you has thought through these issues very carefully. I'd just like to add my main reasons for supporting SB 98.

It's the right thing to do.

As Senator Grobschmidt said in his comments, SB 98 is good public policy for the children of Wisconsin.

A high stakes test could create an alienated underclass in our schools.

Think about it. If 100% of Wisconsin's school children pass the tests, policy makers are likely to complain that the test is too easy. Someone has to fail. These necessary failures are likely to be relegated to second class status. Other places that have tried high stakes testing find more kids drop out. Children who stay in school and struggle against a rigid testing system that requires some failures may become increasingly frustrated and angry.

The Middleton/Cross Plains Area School District could participate in the state testing program.

You know that the Milwaukee Public Schools have their own standards and assessments. The Middleton/Cross Plains Area School District has also adopted their own standards instead of the state's model standards. We've been asked "What's wrong with the state standards?" Our reply is "What's wrong with ours?" In fact, the two sets of standards are very similar. One way they differ, though, is in sequence. Some things that are on the state's 4th grade list are taught in 5th grade in our schools. Rather than spending staff development hours to reorganize our curricular sequence, we decided to go with our own standards.

We'd like to use the state assessments. We find them useful. However, we can't use them if we have to retain children in 4th or 8th grade because they didn't learn something that was never taught. If the state tests are just one factor to be considered for promotion or graduation, as SB 98 proposes, we could participate in the program.

Lowering the stakes will save money.

If the first 3 points aren't convincing, let me add this one. Savings will come from two areas. First, the test development and administration costs will be lower. High stakes tests must meet very high standards of reliability and validity. Such test development and the necessary security measures are very expensive. Second, there will be legal challenges to the high stakes tests. High school students who are denied diplomas will sue. Families of 4th and 8th grade students who are retained because of a few points on one section of the test will sue. High stakes tests will take the state and local school districts down a long, litigious road. Education dollars should be spent in classrooms, not in courtrooms.

Again, thank you all very, very much for your leadership on these state testing issues. I look forward to working together to get this bill passed in the Assembly.