

To: House Education Committee  
From: Malcolm Kirkpatrick  
In re: SB 1282 In opposition  
2011-03-16

## LATE TESTIMONY

I testify today in opposition to SB 1282, which allows schools to opt out of norm-referenced standardized tests. I will define terms, review some DOE history with standardized tests, then address details of the current bill.

A measure is an order relation on a set. Height, weight, temperature, and IQ are measures.

A test is a procedure or device for establishing a measure. Standing back-to-back is a measure of height. A pan balance or seesaw is a measure of weight.

A standard is a unit of measurement. A kilogram is a unit of weight (properly, of mass). A meter stick is a unit of length.

A standardized test is a test which expresses its result in terms of a standard.

Test A is more accurate than test B if it partitions the measured population into smaller units.

Test A is more reliable than test B if successive applications of test A on the same population yield more highly correlated scores than successive applications of test B.

Test A is more valid than test B if scores on test A are more highly correlated with some other, generally-accepted test C of the same population. \*

A norm-referenced test is a test which uses a score on the test (e.g., the median or mean score) as its standard. Other forms of academic tests are criterion-referenced tests and ipsative tests. A test instrument may function simultaneously as norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, , and ipsative.

For decades, between 1960 and 1990, the DOE claimed that Hawaii students performed below average on standardized tests of English but above average on standardized tests of Math. Then, in 1990, the Hawaii DOE participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); and student scores put Hawaii in the national cellar in English and Math. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports NAEP scores in several formats: percentile scores, mean scores, and proficiency scores. The NAEP tests Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, and Statistics. No student takes the whole NAEP. The NCES does not make available to the public scores of individual students, schools, or (with the exception of the Hawaii DOE and Washington, DC) individual school districts. Presented as percentile scores, the NAEP is a norm-referenced standardized test. Presented as proficiency scores, the NAEP is a criterion-referenced test.

DOE officials have claimed of some schools that "65% of the students scored above average or above" on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT). This sounds good until you understand that they use an idiosyncratic definition of "average" in which the range of possible scores is compressed into the bottom 23% ("below average"), the middle 54% ("average") and the top 23% ("above average"). Over the entire US, the "average" school will have 77% (not 65%) "average or above average": Quite simply, they lied.

Former Superintendent Paul Le Mahieu made "standards and accountability the pillars of his reform efforts. As it turned out, "accountability" meant "more power to the Superintendent (which he used to launder through PREL a \$200,000 non-bid personal service contract to his mistress). During his tenure, Dr. LeMahieu changed the grades to which the DOE applied the SAT from 4,6 to 3,5. and represented the inevitable smaller gap between Hawaii performance and national performance as improvement. He lied, and the Education reporters for the Advertiser and Star-Bulletin repeated the DOE line. They lied.

SB 1282 will reduce the risk to DOE spokespeople that their misrepresentations of DOE performance will be exposed.

In support of SB 1282 Superintendent Matayoshi wrote: "Consistent standards will provide appropriate benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live and will define the knowledge and skills students should possess within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs."

Repealing the requirement that DOE schools administer the SAT and NAEP is the opposite of "consistent". The prospective tests of the new "Common Core" standards do not exist.

When the State government lets a contract for the construction of a freeway overpass, it defines "freeway overpass" with contract specifications. Similarly, the State cannot purchase education without a definition of "education". This bill would allow the DOE to write its contract with taxpayers in disappearing ink.

The bill states: "The recent implementation of the common core state standards initiative led by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers, has resulted in a set of common core state standards in English language arts and mathematics that have been developed by teachers, school administrators, and experts..."

These "experts" gave us Whole Language methods of reading instruction, "Discovery" methods of Math instruction, Portfolio assessment, block scheduling, and countless other lunatic fads. You have no reason to trust them now.