Christa Krohn Testimony

May 22 Senate Education Committee

First, want to thank the Chairmen and the committee for the opportunity to speak to you today it is an honor.  I also would like to thank National Thought Partner Theresa Morris of Stanford SCALE who dropped everything in a moments notice to be here today.

I am here to testify in support of capstones and a culminating student experience.

Senators, I want you to think back to a really exciting time in your life when you were ready to get your drivers license.  Or perhaps you're like me and you’ve just walked through this experience as a parent of a new driver.

You studied and took the permit test, essentially you proved to the world that you possessed a basic knowledge of driving when you passed that test.

But this wasn’t the end, you were still not recognized as a competent driver you had to come back to the BMV after hours of practice to complete the in-car driving test essentially, a performance assessment or capstone project or a culminating experience.  Once you passed this test you were recognized as a safe driver and were issued a drivers license.

It is vital to obtain a permit and perform well on that standardized test. Our system for obtaining a drivers license represents a balanced system that uses both standardized and performance assessment in appropriate ways to ensure that we have safe and competent drivers on the road.

Could you imagine if we stopped at permit tests and didn’t require an in-car assessment? Again, as a parent of a new driver, I can assure you this is NOT a good idea!  Basic knowledge of driving and actual driving are two very different things.

We also know that whether you take the permit or the in-car drivers test at the BMV in Cleveland or in Ottowa you are held to the same standard across bureaus and across in-car driving assessors.  If we can create a scalable, reliable and valid system for ensuring safe and competent drivers surely we can do this in our K-12 educational systems.

You may not be aware, but In Ohio, there is a team of 6 school districts that have been working with performance assessments for 4 years and experiencing success. We proved validity through a rigorous 10 step process in adhering to a common architecture.  We have proven reliability through norming calibrations led by Stanford’s Center for Assessment Learning and Equity. Performance assessments support Ohio’s Strategic Education Plan in using a whole child approach to achieve priority standards 1 and 3-10. As an instructional coach, I have witnessed this type of assessment have a powerful change on instruction, making it deeper and more connected to the real world. For more information on our work, I encourage you to visit our website at bit.ly/TransformOHEdu

Yesterday, I spoke with project manager and scientist Nancy Rabel Hall from NASA Glenn in CLE.  Nancy gave me example after example of Ohio students engaging in capstone projects that are benefiting NASA through the HUNCH program. NASA Glenn a large Ohio employer and is in support of capstone projects.

Performance Assessment work doesn’t stop in Ohio, in fact, TX, CA, VA, CO, KY, WI, MN, NH, CT are all at varying levels of creation and/or implementation of a complimentary performance assessment system.

Senators as you work to create a graduation policy that will uphold the mission of Ohio’s Strategic Education Plan and benefit the constituents whom you represent I want to leave you with this question.

Will Ohio continue to be a state that stops at the learner's permit test?