

Dear Mr. Berkobien,

I sent this email to members of the House, including Rep. Gelser but I am hopeful that my voice will be heard again.

I am terribly upset about HB 2748. Should it pass, not only am I concerned about the education my own child *won't* receive but all families who should have a choice. If HB 2748 passes, families will choose from their own large public school or smaller exclusive expensive private schools (providing their child is accepted). I do not understand why this choice might be removed. Riverdale is the best of both: a small nurturing, respectful school district where children excel, yet without the large price tag or financial exclusivity of a Catlin Gabel or OES. **Please oppose House Bill 2748.**

Dear Representative Gelser and members of the Education Committee,

I am a single mother trying to provide a good education for my children. When I was married my then husband and I chose to move to the Riverdale School District because we were so impressed with the K-8 Grade School. I was impressed with the passion of the teachers, the involvement of the parents, and the small class sizes. I had a lot to compare it to as we had moved many times (my eldest daughter, who was entering 6th grade at the time, had already attended 5 schools in 4 different school districts; all were top rated schools and districts) We were sold on Riverdale and we have never regretted it.

When it was time for both of my daughters to go to high school we looked at many other schools in the Portland area but we chose to stay in our home district as we felt Riverdale High School offered the best education for both of my children. Similar to the Grade School we were impressed with the small class sizes, the excellent and passionate teachers, the kind and respectful environment, the no-cut sports policy, the excellent art program, theater program—and all at a public school.

My oldest daughter is now in college. She received an excellent education at Riverdale High School and was accepted to top colleges including USC, NYU, and was wait listed at Cornell. I firmly believe that she would not have been accepted to such good schools, including U of O Honors College, had she not attended Riverdale High School. Because of the small class sizes she was able to get individualized attention and learned to think critically. She is well rounded as she played 4 sports, went to State in Mock Trial, participated in the State Bridge Building competition, earned Gold and Bronze Keys in the Scholastic Art Awards, participated in our theater program—she had many opportunities that she would not have had at larger schools because she would have been cut. She is passionate about art, and many other public schools have cut their art programs due to funding deficits.

My youngest daughter now attends Riverdale High School and is receiving an excellent education. Her strengths are totally different than her sister's but Riverdale meets students where they are. She is thriving in the small nurturing, respectful environment. She works hard because it's cool to be a good student. As a single mother it is financially challenging to live in

our home so that my daughter can attend Riverdale, our public high school---but the education she is receiving is well worth the sacrifices I am making.

Riverdale provides an excellent education and is an alternative to large public schools where kids often fall between the cracks. Not every student thrives in large public high schools where kids learn to fill in bubbles on standardized tests, where art and music aren't offered because schools can't afford them, where there isn't a culture of respect for other students and teachers. Nor can everyone afford to send their children to the very expensive private schools in the area. Riverdale fills an important niche as a high performing school offering an excellent and well rounded education in a safe and respectful environment.

Therefore, I do not understand why HB 2748 is even being introduced. If something isn't broken then don't "fix" it—or in this case please don't kill it. Please vote down HB 2748. When state funding has been cut so drastically over the past few years it has been necessary to fund our schools by raising money through our Foundation and through tuition paid by parents who want their children to receive an excellent education. I do not understand why energy is going into thwarting those efforts instead of supporting and applauding high performing schools. My other concern is that we have not been given a voice in this matter. We were not made aware of this legislation until *after* the public hearing, and then only by accident. Clearly that is not fair to our parents, students, or homeowners.

Please oppose HB 2748.

Sincerely,
Betsy Edwards
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