

Chair Gelser, Members of the the Committee, my name is Ariel Shattan.

I am the parent of a tuition student, a junior, at Riverdale High School, and of a recent RHS graduate, also a tuition student. I would like to come out strongly against House Bill 2748.

We choose to send our children to Riverdale High School not only for its academic reputation, but because our older student needed the supportive environment it offered. At Riverdale High School, the teachers see the students over and over through the years, get to know them and their capabilities, and work with parents to make sure no student slips through the cracks and is let fail through inattention. This attention kept our son on track through graduation and helped him get the grades and test scores he needed to go on to college.

Our two very different students have both benefited from their Riverdale experiences. The community is vibrant and welcoming, and our children have been able to participate in special programs that they would not have been offered in other schools. Our junior daughter would never have become a volleyball player without Riverdale's no-cut athletics program, nor would she have had the performing arts opportunities she's had if she'd gone to another school. Our recent graduate son found his life's calling through the research he did for his senior exhibition project. The fact that all the teachers know all the students has been wonderful for both our kids.

If our junior is forced to leave the Riverdale community for her senior year, it would seriously damage her future. She would be forced to leave an educational community that knows her and supports her and wants the best for her. Without the counselors and teachers who taught her and know her to write her recommendation letters, her college applications will lose their power, and she will not be admitted to the colleges that will best serve her needs.

Our family lives in the Portland school district, which does not offer a transfer option with Riverdale. The choice to send our children to Riverdale High School, even though it is an economic burden on the family, has meant the ability to choose the best educational option for us. I object strongly to having that choice taken away.

The logic behind House Bill 2748 eludes me. It is to no-one's benefit to prohibit districts in Oregon from accepting tuition students. In these times of decreasing state funding, if a district offers benefits that attract families so strongly that families are willing to pay, then uses these funds to benefit all students in the school – resident, transfer, and tuition alike – well, it seems that this is a model to propagate, not remove from play. Who would benefit by its removal? Certainly not any students in the district.

House Bill 2748 will hurt many, and benefit none. Please oppose House Bill 2748.

Thank you for your time and attention,
--Ariel Shattan