



February 26, 2013

TO: House Committee on Revenue

From: Christina McMahan, Juvenile Services Division Director

RE: HB 2889 – Funding for Juvenile Detention Education Programs

Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ) urges your support of HB 2889, a bill designed to increase equity and stability in educational programming for youth who are detained in county juvenile department detention centers. Under HB 2889, Juvenile Detention Education Programs would receive from the State School Fund for each school year a special State School Fund grant, consisting of an increased Average Daily Membership (ADM) funding rate of 2.0 versus the current 1.5 rate. Additionally, annual funding from the special State School Fund grant would be based on the higher of the previous two years of juvenile detention facility ADM to ensure consistent and adequate funding of education services.

Why is this bill needed?

Youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system typically have known educational challenges, which research has established is a significant risk factor for continued delinquency and/or involvement in the adult criminal justice system. Many of these youth have special needs and are on individualized education plans (IEPs). In Multnomah County in 2012, youth referred to the Juvenile Services Division for delinquency issues had high levels of identified educational risk factors, as documented by a validated assessment tool, the Juvenile Crime Prevention Risk Assessment:

- ◆ 41% had academic failure
- ◆ 41% were chronic truants
- ◆ 37% had been suspended or expelled during the previous six months
- ◆ 1 in 5 youth had known learning disabilities or cognitive deficits

In Multnomah County, youth of color experience academic failures and problems at disproportionately higher rates, and this is a major issue our community is working toward improving.

In 2012, Multnomah County's Donald E. Long Juvenile Detention Facility detained:

- ◆ 447 youth (unduplicated count)
- ◆ 63% of the youth detained where youth of color
- ◆ 20% of detained youth were lodged on Ballot Measure 11 Charges
- ◆ The average age at time of detention was 15.9 years

Students who enter the juvenile justice system face many barriers to their re-entry into traditional schools, and are disproportionately youth of color. JDEP programs help address the barriers to re-entry into traditional schools, by providing educational assessments, facilitation of the transfer of school records, and individualized educational plan for youth to work on while in the detention facility, opportunities for youth to receive educational credit towards grade completion or graduation for the work they complete in detention, and a facilitated plan for the youth to return to their home school. For many youth, the Juvenile Detention Education Program may be the first time they actually experience success and achievement in any educational setting, and a chance to interrupt the "school to prison pipeline." This is an opportunity that should not be squandered for our community, or for these youth.