

Good afternoon,

As a high school administrator for the last five years I have seen countless lives' trajectory changed by the opportunities that the post graduate scholar program has provided. I implemented the program for the Jefferson County School District and many of the students that participated or are currently participating in the program would never have gone to college if it wasn't for the program. One student that embodies what this program means is a Latino student who graduated with a 2.25 GPA. This student would not have qualified for the Oregon Promise, which has a 2.5 GPA requirement. His low GPA was the result of him not taking high school seriously during his freshman and sophomore year and not seeing the relevance in his education. As he grew up he began to understand the value of his education and did very well his junior and senior year. His parents, who had immigrated from Mexico, wanted him to go to college but were sure they couldn't afford it. He joined our first ever cohort and earned all As and a few Bs in his coursework at the community college. He is now in his second year of community college and is interested in pursuing a career in law enforcement. If this program had not existed, this student would be languishing in Madras with no direction or purpose.

I implore you to vote YES for SB 1537. The post graduate scholar program is crucial to providing equitable access to post-secondary education for all of our students, particularly those who are students of color and/or first generation college students. Oregon Promise does not provide the support that only school districts can provide families when it comes to enrolling in and being successful at the college level. Having more students attend community college is beneficial for all citizens of Oregon. Having an educated workforce means more tax revenue and less crime. Please vote YES.

Thanks for your time,

Paul Navarra