



February 3, 2016

Chair Margaret Doherty  
House Committee on Education  
State Capitol Building  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 4002

Dear Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee,

Chalkboard Project supports HB 4002 and its statewide approach to addressing chronic absenteeism. In 2012, Chalkboard Project partnered with the Children's Institute and Attendance Works, a national nonprofit focused on school attendance, to commission a report on chronic absenteeism in Oregon. As you know, what the report found was startling and urgent. Too many of Oregon's kids are missing too many days of school.

Chalkboard has released two additional studies that highlight the impact of chronic absenteeism. In 2014, Chalkboard released, "*Condition of Education for Oregon's Tribal Students*," which among other things found that one third of Oregon tribal students were chronically absent in 2011-12, compared to 19 percent of non-AI/An-identified students. Rates were highest at the high school level, with 43 percent of Oregon tribal students chronically absent. This prompted the legislature to create the Tribal Attendance Pilot Project in the 2015 legislative session. And just last month, Chalkboard released, "*Rural Education In Oregon; Overcoming the Challenges of Income and Distance*." The report found that more than 1 in 5 rural students miss more than 10 days of school, a significant challenge to improving student achievement in Oregon's rural schools. However, the report also highlights school districts that are overcoming the impacts of poverty and distance on student success.

A statewide plan like that called for in HB 4002 will help to provide a more comprehensive and cohesive statewide strategy that can utilize the information produced in reports like these and help reduce rates of chronic absenteeism.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Hildick".

Sue Hildick  
President, Chalkboard Project

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