

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**House Committee On Education****Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact**Action Date:** 02/05/16**Action:** Do Pass And Be Referred To Ways And Means By Prior Reference**Meeting Dates:** 02/03, 02/05**Vote:**

Yeas: 7 - Barreto, Doherty, Frederick, Hack, McLain, Piluso, Reardon

Nays: 2 - Sprenger, Wilson

Prepared By: Richard Donovan, Committee Administrator**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Directs Department of Education to develop and implement statewide education plan to address chronic absences of students from public schools. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Measure as move towards 40-40-20 education goal
- Documented negative impacts of chronic absenteeism on students
- Connections between chronic absenteeism, poor academic achievement, decreased rates of graduation, and negative impact on workforce quality
- Desire to move away from recommending punishment of students
- Concern that measure directs funds and attention of legislators to agencies rather than classrooms

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Absenteeism has been a challenge in Oregon schools for quite some time. The definition of chronic absenteeism varies, but is generally listed as missing between 10 and 20 percent of school days in a year. This translates to missing roughly 18 to 40 days of school. Multiple studies have been conducted on chronic absenteeism, all finding dramatically negative impacts on students. Some examples include:

- “In a nationally representative data set, chronic absence in kindergarten was associated with lower academic performance in first grade. The impact is twice as great for students from low-income families.” (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012.)
- “Chronic Absenteeism is the strongest predictor of dropping out of high school... stronger than other factors such as number of suspensions or student test scores, even when taking into account student demographics.” (Byrnes & Reyna, 2012.)
- “Significant gaps in academic performance are apparent in third grade and persist all the way through high school for students who are chronically absent, leading to increased dropout and decreased graduation rates.” (Buehler, Tapanoga, & Chang, 2012.)
- “In the 2009-10 school year, nearly a quarter of all K-12 students in Oregon were chronically absent.” (Ibid.)

House Bill 4002 directs the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to develop and implement a statewide plan to address chronic absences of public school students, and to report a summary of the plan to the Legislature no later

than December 1, 2016. The measure specifies the contents of the plan, and requires ODE to collaborate with the Department of Human Services, the Oregon Health Authority, the Early Learning Division, and community and education stakeholders in development and implementation of the plan.