

April 8, 2017

Dear House Education Committee,

I am communicating with you with regard to HB 3395. This bill would allow school districts to employ individuals licensed as school social workers to provide to students in kindergarten through grade 8 services that Licensed Professional School Counselors are uniquely and specifically trained to provide.

I am a Licensed Professional School Counselor in Eugene; I have worked as a school counselor for 30 years, and currently oversee the K-12 Comprehensive School Counseling Program for Eugene School District 4J. I also currently serve as K-12 VP in the *Oregon School Counselor Association*, and am a long-term member of the *American School Counselor Association*. Additionally, I serve on Oregon's *Reach Higher* team, the ODE team that is updating *Oregon's Framework for School Counseling*, and the statewide *C3 (College, Career) Collaborative*.

I strongly encourage you to vote **NO on HB 3395**. School social workers do not have the educational preparation, training or experience to provide the Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance services stipulated in OARs 541-022-1510, 541-022-0405, or 541-022-1130. The developmental needs of all students in a K-12 educational setting are unique and well defined within the *Oregon Framework for Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling* and by the legal mandates in the referenced OARs. Licensed Professional School Counselors are specifically trained and prepared to address the Academic, Career and Social/Emotional needs of all students within the educational setting and fulfill all mandates. Social workers are not.

As the lead counselor in our district, I have worked with school counselors and social workers for many years. Their roles are significantly different, despite small areas of overlap. The role of the school counselor is vital to the success and development of each student, and to increasing the graduation rates and career readiness of each student. We cannot afford to leave this vital role in the hands of well intentioned but not appropriately trained individuals.

For the reasons above, I again implore you to vote NO on HB 3395.

Yours truly,

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