

April 11, 2017

Dear Members of the House Committee on Education,

It is again with alarm that I am writing to you—this time regarding HB 3395, which would allow school social workers to be hired to provide the services that K-8 school counselors provide. The scope of the training for school counselors and for school social workers has some small overlap, but it is not in the area of developing and delivering a comprehensive school counseling program, which is mandated by OARs 541-022-1510, 541-022-0405, and 541-022-1130. A comprehensive school counseling program focuses on student's personal/social, academic, and career development (ASCA, nd). These interrelated domains encompass the K-12 College- and Career-Readiness Standards (ASCA, 2014) school counselors use to directly impact students' development. In contrast, according to the School Social Work Association of America, "maximizing school-based and community-based resources is the primary indirect or macro-practice component of school social work services. This may involve coordinating available services within the school or reaching out to community partners to secure services" (Frey et al., 2013).

Please vote NO on HB 3395. Putting school social workers in the position of school counselors in grades K-8 would be a disservice to students and quite frankly, to school social workers themselves. If school social workers want to do the work of school counselors, they need to pursue the training for it. Licensure-only certificate programs are readily available in Oregon for persons with a master's level social work degree wanting to become licensed school counselors. Just as school counselors are not hired for social worker positions, neither should school social workers be hired as school counselors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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