

February 6, 2017

To: Representative Margaret Doherty, Chair
House Education Committee

From: Michelle Jensen, PhD

Re: HB 2529 Support

Testimony in Support of HB 2529

Chair Doherty and members of the House Education Committee:

Thank you for admitting my written testimony today. My name is Michelle Jensen. I have been an educator in Oregon for the last 11 years serving as a school counselor, a school counseling educator, a program coordinator and now as an elementary administrator. In addition to 11 years of experience in Oregon public schools, I am a college and career specialist- holding a PhD in Counseling from Oregon State University with research in the area of elementary college and career readiness.

I would like to speak to HB 2529. HB 2529 addresses the value and increasing need for school administrators to have specialized training in the school counseling framework and best practices for supervising school counselors. My previous experience working as both a school counselor and administrator have given me a unique perspective to speak to this. I was incredibly blessed in my practice to have administrators that really understood the work I did as a school counselor, however that was not always true for my colleagues. The difference is evident in the ability for a school counselor to do their job effectively.

The working relationship between an administrator and counselor is key to a successful school. We are living during a time that students are coming to schools with more and more adverse childhood experiences- this is an urgent time in public schools. Administrators with appropriate training will find their work to be more productive and higher levels of success in their schools when they have an understanding of the school counseling framework. Additionally, this coursework requirement will provide educators seeking administration/leadership positions in public school the confidence needed to both release counselors to do the work they are trained to do and the knowledge and understanding to appropriately supervise and evaluate their counselors effectively.

I am passionately requesting your support in passing HB 2529.