



SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Education Center

*520 N.W. Wall Street
Bend, Oregon 97701-2699*

February 27, 2018

Honorable House Judiciary and Senate Judiciary Members,

It is with heavy hearts, we find ourselves in an emergency situation regarding the safety of our students, teachers and staff. We write today to urge your support of school and community safety efforts that must be enacted to law during the current short session. You will immediately help to improve school and community safety throughout Oregon by: writing a new crime in Oregon of **terroristic threat** at a felony level and **extending maximum detention** from 36 hours to 10 days for misdemeanor charges filed against youth with weapons offenses.

As the Board of Directors of Oregon's fifth largest school district, we have seen firsthand how our legislators can move mountains in short order when lives are at risk. We plead for you to do this now.

Our top priority today is your action to **enact a new statute for credible terroristic threats** to commit crimes of violence or threats to cause bodily injury to another person and terrorization as the result of a threat or plan. Make credible terroristic threats a felony level crime for anyone who threatens attacks in our communities, schools and places of work. Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel and Bend Police Chief Jim Porter have reviewed and support this proposal.

We request your swift action to **extend maximum detention** from 36 hours to 10 days for misdemeanor charges filed against youth with weapons offenses or those who make threats to others to allow for proper record sharing and community safety plan development before release.

You have an opportunity, during this short session, to prioritize a preventative culture for school safety.

We cannot continue with the culture of reaction after lives have been lost.

Just days ago, in our own district, we learned of a potential attack on one of our schools by a student. This was a credible threat, according to law enforcement. Though this youth remains in custody, much thanks to our District Attorney and his team, the suspect could have been released hours after his arrest and back into our community before proper safety plans could be set into motion, due to the lack of charges appropriate to his behavior. School districts in Oregon desperately need tools to identify, assess and prevent horrific acts of violence. Districts and our partners need the ability to act preventatively before harm is done to our students.

As your short session is nearing its end, we ask that you work swiftly to make these asks a reality and continue your commitment to improve school and community safety for all Oregonians.

We look forward to working with you in the days to come and thank you on behalf of our more than 18,300 student and Oregon's 570,000 students across the state.

Sincerely,

Bend-La Pine Schools Board of Directors

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Julie Craig, Vice Chair

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