

MALHEUR EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT REGION 14

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Stephanie Navarrete
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17 February 2019

RE: HB 2457 Letter of Support

Dear Chair Doherty and House Education Committee members,

This letter is in support of HB 2457 which seeks to evaluate licensing requirements and methods for teacher promotion in the "Eastern Oregon Border Economic Develop Region". Currently, secondary teaching positions in mathematics, science, special education, and elective classes are extremely difficult to fill in our region due to the proximity with Idaho, and the subsequent licensing requirements across the border. Oftentimes these positions go unfilled and are supplemented with online classes, or the candidate pools are limited to a single individual who may be inadequate. Both situations prevent the level of education we seek for our rural students.

A specific example is our current Nurse Assistant program Director. Oregon requires this individual to be a licensed registered nurse, have previously taught post-secondary, worked at a hospital, and have worked in a long term care facility to be considered for the position. Idaho only requires the individual to be a registered nurse. The difficulty in finding this position nearly caused the program to be cancelled. To date, 31 students have received their CNA, and 21 are currently undergoing their clinicals this year. However, with that success, the program is held hostage by the fact that if we lose our program director, the chances of finding another are extremely limited.

Our hope is that the evaluation process will identify these barriers that exist, and promote innovative ways of licensing instructors that both increase candidate pools, and the cultural diversity of our candidates. There is currently such a pathway in career technical education, where an individual working directly in industry, without a bachelor's degree, can attain a restricted license for their field, and in three years become a certified teacher. In other disciplines such as mathematics, science, or Spanish, they must first have a bachelor's degree. Our region is of the opinion, that if an individual is bilingual and without a bachelor's degree, and has the skills necessary to teach Spanish, that they should be able to follow a similar path to licensure as the career technical education pathway. Similarly, other disciplines should benefit from this process as well.

Thank you all for your time and consideration of HB 2457, and please feel free to contact me anytime at Mark.Redmond@malesd.org if you have further questions.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Redmond".

Mark Redmond

Superintendent

Malheur Education Service District