

Chair Clem and Members of the Committee,

I am a school counselor at Durham Center in TTSD. I am writing on behalf of our staff and students.

I am writing to ask you to support HB 2579 through funding expansion. Over and over again, we have bared witness to the bounty literally, and figuratively that these programs have provided for our students, current, and graduated. It is a beautiful program and we are blessed to have the opportunity to access it.

Our farms help our students in particular because most are of a low socio-economic status and cannot afford healthy food, nor do they have the time or resources to access farms and farming.

We have had numerous cases of kids who were resistant to working in the ground and were unable to see a future beyond entry-level positions, deeply connect with the staff and begin envisioning an entirely different future.

When we have kids who we feel are not yet ready to merge in to the workforce, but could grow over time in the right environment, we connect them with our farming program. It is a necessary interim step for many. They flourish there and then are able to consider, and be eligible for, other jobs in the same, or different fields.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Brittany Eide  
School Counselor  
Durham Education Center; TTSD  
Tigard, Oregon