



House Committee on Education
Re: HB 2440, Relating to statewide education plans

March 4, 2019

Chair Doherty, Vice Chair Alonso Leon, Vice Chair Helt, and Members of the Committee:
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2440, which would create a Latino Student Success Plan. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Advocacy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color.

The Coalition of Communities of Color is an alliance of culturally-specific community based organizations with representation from the following communities of color: African, African American, Asian, Latino, Middle Eastern, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Slavic. Our mission is to address the socioeconomic disparities, institutional racism and inequity of services experienced by our families, children, and communities; and to organize our communities for collective action resulting in social change to obtain self-determination, wellness, justice and prosperity.

Within Oregon's increasingly diverse population, Latino/as are the fastest growing minority community. Yet many Latino students face educational disparities across the learning spectrum. We can take a step toward mitigating these disparities by increasing access to culturally responsive education and supports that position Latino students to succeed. The legislation before you today is a step forward in advancing these goals.

HB 2440 directs the Oregon Department of Education to establish an advisory committee with stakeholders from impacted communities across the state, along with representatives from the Early Learning Division, the Oregon Department of Education, and Higher Education Coordinating Commission. The committee will be charged with developing a plan to address the historical inequities and barriers impacting Latino students throughout their education and recommending grants to institutions and community-based partners to implement the recommendations. By bringing these critical stakeholders together to develop a meaningful partnership dedicated to Latino/a student success, we will build a stronger educational system for all of Oregon's students.

We believe that all students, given access to meaningful support, can succeed in school, from early learning to higher education. Oregon's African-American Student Success Plan and Native American Student Success Plan have advanced educational opportunities for these communities, and it's time to create an analogous plan to support our Latino students.

On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, I respectfully urge you to vote yes on HB 2440 so we can move toward an educational system where every child in Oregon can thrive.

Thank you,
Jenny Lee, Advocacy Director
Coalition of Communities of Color

