



March 8th, 2019

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of HB 2940 to provide schools access to school social workers in Oregon schools. I have worked as the principal of Portland Arthur Academy Charter School, K - 5 elementary, for seven years and five years at a different Arthur Academy site. We have never had the option of having a school social worker. This year I had the opportunity to have a social worker intern be with us. At first I was not sure how to fill her time and after just a month of being in the school her schedule is completely full with a waiting list.

Not only does she meet with students individually, she meets with families to support their needs. She created a Backpack Program to send food home over every weekend with students, a food box program to provide monthly staples to families and ensures that the school office has healthy items for students that come to school hungry. Of our 135 families, over twenty are taking advantage of the food programs.

She has been a wealth of knowledge to our staff and families. The services that the community provides has been unused because we just didn't realize it was available. With our social worker intern's help we have provided families with the information needed to access these community resources. What I have learned is that the mental health knowledge and awareness of systemic issues impacting our communities that school social workers bring to our Oregon families is what makes having social workers in schools such a benefit.

For the last couple months I have been concerned about how I will maintain the services she has put into place when she moves on. Having social workers in schools is an invaluable resource that deserves our attention. All Oregon students deserve to have access to the services provided by our school social workers.

Thank you for your time and consideration of HB 2940!
Susan Spreadborough
Portland Arthur Academy Principal

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