



Oregon Juvenile Department Directors' Association

Representing Oregon's County Juvenile Departments

www.ojdda.org

- Joe Ferguson, President
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OJDDA
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OJDDA Urges Support for HB 2910

The Oregon Juvenile Department Directors' Association (OJDDA) urges your support for HB 2910 to remove barriers and enhance the educational opportunities for our young people to seek higher education.

There are many barriers for young people involved with the juvenile justice system or any state system to complete their education and have the opportunity for college. The Oregon Promise program was developed specifically to remove barriers and help vulnerable populations of youth have the opportunity to jump start learning in a college setting and enhance their lives.

For many youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system, family structures have been unstable and families are highly mobile which often results in youth changing schools frequently. This leads to missed learning opportunities for youth as they attempt to get engaged in a new school setting. Education is not always the highest priority for their families who are struggling with income, housing and a variety of other obstacles.

Research is clear that school success reduces involvement in the criminal justice system and is something we should encourage and support at any opportunity.

Youth who are placed in a Youth Correctional Facility or Juvenile Detention Center often experience success educationally they have not had in the public school setting. Individualized education, smaller class sizes and being clean and sober are all benefits youth experience in these types of correctional education settings. If a youth completes their educational requirements for their high school diploma or GED while incarcerated,

under current law they have six months in which to enroll in a college program to qualify for the Oregon Promise.

Sometimes a young person may still have more than six months remaining in a correctional setting even after they have completed their educational requirements for their diploma or GED.

HB 2910 changes the law to allow for a detained or incarcerated youth to qualify for the Oregon Promise benefits changing the timeline for qualifying to six months from the time of the young person's release from the correctional setting.

Knowing that research supports education as a crime reducing technique, the educational investment in the future of a young person is a smart investment for our communities where these young people will be living.

Please join OJDDA in supporting HB 2910 to reduce barriers justice-involved youth face after making positive changes in their lives by successfully meeting educational requirements. Join us in supporting young people who have been involved in the juvenile justice system continuing to make positive changes in their lives when they are released from a correctional setting and living in our communities.

OJDDA President

Joe Ferguson

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