

## **HB 2990 Testimony**

Chair Doherty, Vice-Chair Helt, and Members of the House Education Committee:

For the record, my name is Teresa Alonso Leon, and I am the Representative for House District 22, which incorporates Woodburn through the North part of Salem. As someone who sees the benefits of family engagement and data, I support HB 2990

HB 2990 strives to strengthen partnerships between schools, families, and communities by creating a task force, which will be composed of agencies such as the Oregon Department of Education, and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, as well as educators and administrators who serve English Language Learners, rural, low income and culturally diverse populations. Parents of the previously mentioned demographics are also included in the makeup of the 17 members of this task force.

The goal of this task force is to report back with legislative changes and best practices for successful programs that increase family engagement. The task force will examine existing programs strengths and weaknesses in our states and others, with an emphasis on demographics of rural, low-income racially and culturally diverse communities.

When parents can see their children in these institutions, they become invested in their education, and in turn, this helps a student thrive. One of many ways family engagement keeps a student on track for graduation is by preventing chronic absenteeism. According to a tool kit by the Oregon Department of Education on family and absenteeism, "Parents and families are essential partners in promoting good attendance because they, ultimately, have the bottom-line responsibility for making sure their children get to school every day."

A task force is critical in analyzing what programs are working, so we can wisely invest state funds in supporting our students. It's not enough for us to create new systems for student success if we are not using data-based models to be strategic. This bill offers the opportunity for us to head towards a direction of data-based models.

Family engagement is essential to a student's success.

I urge you to support HB 2990 so that we can learn how to better support family engagement.