

Dear Joint Committee for Student Success,

Thank you for your work to support Oregon learners. It is imperative that our legislators and people of the state of Oregon realize that learning can and will happen when essential programs are adequately and fully funded to meet the critical needs of our learners.

That has been proven repeatedly since Henry S. Truman signed the National School Lunch program in 1946, that hungry children can't learn. Now is the time we must focus our attention on the social and emotional barriers to learning. Our children can't learn unless social and emotional barriers are removed, too. Oregon has the opportunity to lead the nation by addressing the social and emotional challenges student bring to school everyday with the HB 2019.

While we may have most students who are fed nutritious meals during the school day, we still have many students are lacking the social skills, or who have endured emotional trauma and are very difficult to reach and teach. We need more early learning and mental health care professionals and programs to eradicate social skill deficits and emotional challenges, just like we have nearly eradicated hunger. Removing and preventing the physical, social, and emotional barriers is what our children need to be successful learners and to be successful in life. HB 2019 is just the proposal we need make a really difference in student learning.

Even in our small suburban school, we have students living with such emotional trauma and underdeveloped social skills, they need constant adult support regulate their emotions to be in a good space for learning. Our children need regular and routine social skills lessons and emotional regulation and control lessons -- just to access the typical grade level content! This is an insurmountable challenge for a classroom teacher, with 4 or more significantly trauma impacted students, in a classroom of 27 students. Our teachers need help to reach and teach our students with social and emotional barriers to learning. HB 2019 gives us hope that we can make a difference in meeting students needs by addressing barriers to learning.

Investing in students is a long-term decision to invest in the Oregon. In the long run, I believe addressing the social and emotional learning of our children directly impacts academic achievement, the future performance in securing a living wage job, and existing as a productive Oregonian. Please continue your good work and invest in our young learners by fighting to remove all barriers to learning.

Thank you,

Kalay McNamee



At West Tualatin View we aspire to create successful, lifelong learners, who make a positive difference in the global community.

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Beaverton School District Goal: WE empower all students to achieve post-high school success.

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