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Joint Committee On Student Success
Oregon School Psychologists Association

April 25, 2019

Support of House Bill 3427 Relating to Education Funding

The Oregon School Psychologists Association supports the passage of House Bill 3427, relating to education funding. The Oregon School Psychologists Association represents school psychologists in the state of Oregon. School psychologists are highly-trained professionals dedicated to the social, emotional, mental and behavioral health of our students--school funding impacts our ability to serve students in our school communities.

A critical component of student success is access to school-based services and resources for social, emotional and mental health needs. Though only 16% of children who need mental health services receive them, 80% of those who receive services do so in school settings (Baffour, 2016, para. 9). This indicates that a school-based service delivery model is highly effective. School psychologists are trained to work within school systems and meet those needs. In Oregon, only 8% of schools have full-time school psychologists (Baffour, 2016). The National Association of School Psychologists recommends ratios should not exceed 500 to 700 students for one school psychologist and ratios should be lower to support students with special needs (NASP, 2010).

School psychologists are mental health professionals with unique and extensive training in behavioral theory, research, statistics, evidenced-based interventions, and school systems. We are trained to assist school teams in data-based decision making, and in determining precise problems, identifying solutions, and evaluating outcomes of solutions. The knowledge, training and experience we bring to school teams allows us to aid in the implementation of school-wide systems, such as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and crisis intervention plans. School psychologists are doing preventative work with students in kindergarten through 12th grade. We are completing suicide screenings, engaging students in counseling services, and working with school administrations to create welcoming, healthy school climates. The passage of HB 3427 would allow the Department of Education to determine ways in which these crucial services can be funded, allowing school psychologists to continue their work. The Oregon School Psychologists Association urges the passage of HB 3427--funding schools, and the services schools provide, is crucial to the success of the next generation. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Baffour, (2016, September 22). Counsel or Criminalize? Why Students of Color Need Supports, Not Suspensions. Center For American Progress Retrieved from <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/21142816/SupportNotSuspensions-brief.pdf>

National Association of School Psychologists. (2010). Model for comprehensive and integrated school psychological services, NASP practice model overview. Retrieved from https://www.nasponline.org/assets/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/2_PracticeModel.pdf

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