

Chair Doherty and members of the committee,

Today we write on behalf of Vibrant Future Coalition's Macro Committee. Vibrant Future is a drug-free community coalition that works to reduce the impacts of substance abuse in youth within North Clackamas County. The Macro Committee is made up of community partners ranging from law enforcement, public health advocates, school-based staff and other drug/alcohol prevention coalitions in Clackamas County. The committee focuses efforts on community and policy level changes that impact youth, in regards to substance use. Today we write in support of Senate Bill 665A, permitting school districts to store & administer Naloxone.

Naloxone is an opioid antidote that temporarily reverses the impacts of an opioid-related overdose. The drug is available in Oregon to anyone that wishes to get a prescription, which can be provided by either a doctor or pharmacist. When utilized outside of an overdose situation, there is minimal to no risk of harm in exposure. The US has experienced tens of thousands of deaths from the opioid epidemic. Naloxone is a life-saving drug that has helped to drastically lower overdose fatalities throughout the US. Lastly, there is no potential for abuse, addiction or getting high from Naloxone.

This bill would require Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to update the medication OAR, allowing for schools to adopt a Naloxone policy. Under current ODE policy, the students' parent/guardian has to provide written permission for administering any prescription medication, along with instructions. This rule would not suffice in an overdose situation, as overdoses occur unexpectedly and could take place in anyone on school premises. Naloxone is prescribed to be administered to any individual experiencing an opioid overdose, whether or not the prescription was filled for a different person. Therefore, this bill is vital in order to store and administer Naloxone in any Oregon school.

Naloxone is a life-saving drug that has been extremely effective in saving thousands of American lives. Although there have not been many overdoses on school premises in Oregon, this policy would be preventive in nature. The Oregon Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission encourages the state's colleges, universities and public schools to maintain an available stock of Naloxone on their premises. Having Naloxone on site would not only protect students but also staff, administration, parents and families. Naloxone should be compared to having epi-pens or an AED on site. Many other states and school districts have enacted policies allowing for onsite availability of Naloxone to protect the health and well-being of their communities. Such states include: Connecticut, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont, among others.

Today, we call for your support of this legislation and urge you to pass SB 665A, making Naloxone more accessible in our schools, therefore prioritizing the health and safety of our communities.

We thank you for your time and consideration,

VFC Macro Committee