



House Committee on Education
Testimony in Support of HB 4132: Oregon Student Health Survey

Chair Doherty, Vice-Chairs Alonso Leon and Helt, and members of the Committee.

My name is Trish Garner and I am the State Public Policy Chair of the American Association of University Women of Oregon. AAUW has been empowering women since 1881 by advancing equity through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

It is time that the State of Oregon officially and firmly establish a Student Health Survey, particularly given the laudable, if not also challenging, goals that were set by the Student Success Act of 2019. We are all finally appreciating the benefits of collaboration among organizations and agencies that share similar aims. That concept underlies the Act, as well as student success. It should also be the touchstone of state governmental intervention.

An important feature of the proposed Oregon Student Survey is that it will facilitate a more efficient and effective system for delivery of programs and services to and on behalf of students. Unfortunately, students today face a myriad of challenges, which means that schools do as well. These include socioeconomic, mental health, substance abuse, nutritional and other factors. These are the very issues that the Student Health Survey seeks to identify in order to generate the potential for positive change.

The Survey will also allow a number of stakeholders to determine the effectiveness of programmatic interventions. The current Healthy Teens Survey is relied upon by a number of non-governmental groups, including AAUW of OR when it sought to identify the need for additional resources to be expended for Title IX (prohibition of gender discrimination in schools) enforcement. Appropriate levels of funding and agency collaboration will foster the utility and reliability of the Survey.

If a Survey is going to be undertaken, it can only be accomplished with adequate funding and staff. Given the laudable goals established by the Student Success Act, this is not a time to stint.

Effectively obtained and applied, metrics represent a key element in making decisions regarding where to target resources. Given the breadth of the challenges identified above, the need for data is even more pronounced.

AAUW of OR urges you to codify and fund the Oregon Health Survey.

Respectfully submitted,

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