



February 3, 2020

Letter in support of HB4132, the Oregon Student Health Survey Bill

Chair Doherty and Members of the House Committee on Education:

Oregon PTA has an over 100 year history of advocating for children and youth in Oregon. Our volunteers are in hundreds of Oregon schools making a difference for kids every day.

Our history and advocacy has taught us that the best public policy is created when all the facts are understood and an appreciation for the health and well-being of all Oregon youth is known before we launch into solutions.

During the recent *Student Success Committee* hearings we heard over and over deeply personal stories from students, parents, teachers and other school staff and leadership about the challenges facing Oregon's students. Those challenges include homelessness, hunger, bullying, self-harm and other unsafe situations as well as serious struggles with mental and physical health. For some hearing this litany of concerns was startling and revealing of our students' lives and how we were missing a chance to help them. For many it was a first time hearing of how much was needed by students and how we struggle to find supports and solutions.

Oregon PTA supports HB 4132, the Oregon Student Health Survey Bill, to provide educators and health care providers with a deeper fact based understanding of the needs of our Oregon children and youth. With the information provided by this state wide voluntary survey we will be able to meet the needs of our students and better assure their health, well-being and success in school and as they grow into adulthood. Supported by the facts we can better focus on the needs of our Oregon children and youth and to hold us all accountable.

HB4132 creates and sustains a state wide voluntary survey and the outreach needed to learn more about Oregon children's' lives. We need this critical information particularly as we move forward in implementing the Student Success Act. We have an opportunity as a state to make an important impact on the lives and education of Oregon's students. The Oregon Student Health Survey will inform our work to support our children and youth and assure that we are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of our students.

Oregon PTA urges your YES vote on HB 4132, the Oregon Student Health Survey Bill

Otto Schell, Oregon PTA legislative director