



Eugene School District 4J
200 North Monroe Street
Eugene, OR 97402-4295

March 3, 2021

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

The 4J School Board is writing in support of Senate Bill 744 and the suspension of the requirement to show proficiency on the Essential Skills Test before earning a high school diploma in Oregon.

The two-year suspension will give the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) the time to complete a review of the state's graduation requirements and compare those to graduation requirements in other states. It will also provide time to complete an analysis of whether or not the current graduation requirements align with high school diploma requirements in Oregon, and if they are equitable and inclusive. ODE will identify the expectations of employers and postsecondary institutions of education to identify the skills and knowledge graduates need to be successful in work and/or higher education to ensure students receiving a high school diploma in Oregon are prepared for the next steps they choose to pursue.

Our expectation is the analysis be followed by recommendations for changes and improvements to the graduation requirements that will equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their endeavors after graduation from high school, whether they choose to enter the work force or to further their education in a post secondary institution.

When a student successfully completes the courses and credits required to graduate from high school in Oregon, it should provide all the evidence necessary to support eligibility to receive a high school diploma without additional tests or requirements.

We encourage you to pass SB 744.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Submitted by Mary Walston, Chair and Judy Newman Vice-Chair
of the Eugene 4J School Board