



Attention: Senate Education Committee  
Re: Senate Bill 52  
February 2, 2021

This letter come to you in support of Senate Bill 52.

I have been an educator for almost 40 years and have had the honor of engaging with LGBTQ+ student's kindergarten through adulthood for over 15 years. It was a great hope that our public education system would directly address and support our LGBTQ+ students. You have this opportunity before you now.

Our Oregon students who identify as LGBTQ+ are brilliant and resilient. They consistently and persistently tell us what they need to be safe, included, and successful in school. It is up to us, to you, to listen and respond.

Oregon data has shown that our LGBTQ+ students are at more than double the rate of their peers for bullying, school-based sexual assault, absences from school, and suicidal ideation. Further, LGBTQ+ youth who identify as racial/ethnic minorities are at an additional risk because of racial disparities within the same areas.

With more than a decade of national research, educators and youth advocates now know that anti-bias trained education professionals, inclusive curriculum, enumerated anti-bullying policies, and student community building organizations like gay-straight alliances (GSA's) improve school climate, reduce bullying and reduce risk of suicide attempts in LGBTQ+ youth.

We must increase inclusivity, student belonging, and school attendance. While we eliminate bias based harassment and bullying. Senate Bill 52 lays out a comprehensive plan to provide professional development for educators, equitable access to appropriate educational curriculum, facilities, and activities for students, and critical data collection.

We must respond to our students across the state of Oregon who are telling us they need support from their communities. They need to be seen, valued, and supported by their teachers, administrators, coaches, mentors, the Department of Education, and you--our Legislators.

Thank you for supporting our students through Senate Bill 52.

Sincerely,

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