

Heebe neneenino Wox Boo oo. Hinonoei noh Fort Peck Tribes

Hello, my name is Thunder Bear, my English name is Brandon Culbertson. I belong to the Northern Arapaho and Fort Peck Tribal Nations. I am the Title VI American Indian Alaska Native Education Program Coordinator for the Beaverton School District. I am writing in support of this bill so far as it will greatly benefit our state's tribal students', families, communities, and classroom cultures.

For far too long colonial practices based in Native erasure and subjugation have prevailed within the public domain so much so that it has become normative. However, times are changing as Natives and non-Natives alike are working together to build a better future for all our cultures and peoples through recognizing trust treaty responsibilities as well as inherent Native American cultural value.

I look forward to this bill passing as educational institutions have long been associated with terrible traumas for our people many still within living memory. This bill will help to build a bridge toward a brighter future where Natives are free to bring their full selves into public space without fear of conflict rejection or shame. At times it difficult for some Native students to glean a positive sense of self identity particularly within urban areas where they are often far removed from family and community.

Allowing students and families to see themselves in the present as their complete and honorable selves will go a long way toward creating space and place where they/we can see ourselves within the same manner in the future. It is my feeling that creating a positive educational space prior to moving forward in life is one of the best ways to ensure students feel comfortable and welcomed within future educational spaces. An act that will benefit all as Natives students transition toward upcoming life transitions.

Hohou, thank you for the opportunity to give voice to this beautiful opportunity for Oregon, tribal communities, and citizens to collectively move forward in a good way.

Sincerely,

Brandon Culbertson

BSD Title VI AI AN Coordinator

ODE AI AN Advisory Committee VC

OIEA VP

Beaverton City Diversity Advisory Board Member