



## LatinoNetwork

**Testimony of Anthony Castaneda, Policy Manager,  
Regarding HB 2056 - 1  
Senate Committee on Education  
April 21th, 2021**

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and members of the committee,

**Latino Network joins the Oregon Partners for Education Justice in voicing our support for HB 2056-1.** Current requirements present barriers to graduation for students learning English as a second or third language. Allowing greater flexibility around graduation requirements will advance multilingual education and embrace the language assets and skills that young learners bring to the classroom.

**Latino Network is a culturally specific nonprofit serving Latino children, youth, and families in Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties.** Every year our organization provides transformative services to thousands of Latinos in the areas of education and mentorship, leadership development, community healing, and family stability. We support families before, during, and after school through various programs.

Multilingual education provides linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural benefits to students. HB 2056 encourages multilingual education for our state's learners. Learning a second or third language, which for some polyglots is English, supports the building of strong conceptual and academic foundations in young students.

This bill adapts graduation requirements to reflect the state's growing diversity in the student population. This concept advances multilingual education for Oregon students by embracing Language Arts rather than strictly English as a part of core instruction and as a required part of instruction. Revising existing practices and standards allows for greater flexibility in meeting graduation requirements for students whose native language is not English. This helps all of our students – from our youth working against all odds to earn a diploma to students trying to fit in one more elective into a packed schedule.

**We ask the committee to vote YES on HB 2056 with the -1 amendment.** Thank you for your consideration and leadership.