

Chair Neron, Vice Chair Hudson, Vice Chair Wright, and Members of the House Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Sarah Pope. I am the executive director of Stand for Children Oregon. I am pleased to be speaking today in support of Measure 98 and more specifically, Career and Technical Education or CTE.

Every student in Oregon deserves equitable access to a world-class education that prepares them for life beyond the classroom, whether their path leads to college, a career, or both.

Stand for Children wrote and led the campaign to pass Measure 98 in 2016 to address Oregon's at that time nationally low graduation rates. The measure focused resources on three proven strategies to improve high school graduation rates, especially for Oregon's underserved student groups: (1) dropout prevention through 9th grade on track work; (2) CTE; (3) college-credit coursework while in HS or "dual credit".

The goal of Measure 98 has been to bring these promising practices to scale across the state, with an investment of appx. \$800 per HS student to start or expand the three research-based strategies I just mentioned: dropout prevention through 9th grade on track programs, access to career and technical education, college-level courses while in HS.

The data was clear: in Oregon in 2015, the year before the passage of Measure 98, Oregon's four year graduation rate was just 73.8 percent.

Since the measure's passage, the legislature's full funding, and school district's strong implementation, Oregon's students have seen improving outcomes.

We've seen a 6.5 point increase in graduation rates, with students of color and low-income students making the biggest gains - some as great as 12%.

Since the focus of this hearing is on Career and technical education (CTE) specifically, I'm going to turn the remainder of my testimony to that strategy outlined in the legislation.

An ODE report recently noted that "[Measure 98] has contributed to substantial growth in CTE programs and increases in equity of access among the students served." Since the measures passing and implementation, we have seen a 40% increase in career-related programs offered throughout the state.

Access to career-technical education helps make school relevant to students who might otherwise feel disconnected, and opportunities ranging from computer programming, aerospace and culinary arts through hands-on experiences. Students learn about future career opportunities, including trade schools and apprenticeships, and are able to graduate ready to work.

This is important because research shows us that students who are enrolled in CTE courses during HS have much higher graduation rates.

Furthermore, before Measure 98, many districts who did have some form of these programs had “college-bound” and “CTE students” in silos.

Now, district leaders are leveraging Measure 98 funding to embed CTE principles further into core content areas, ensuring real-life learning pathways into more student’s schooling.

With that, I’ll end my testimony today with this two minute video that takes us inside Hillsboro School District’s CTE programs since the implementation of M98...https://youtu.be/n9_ih3zP-co?si=UQCicWnctcOX08Zv&t=230

Thank you,

Sarah Pope
executive director, Stand for Children Oregon