



Success, Achievement, Together ... for All Students

January 26, 2023

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, and Committee Members,

My name is Gretchen Brunner, and I am the Executive Director of School Improvement Services at the Willamette Education Service District (WESD). It is my pleasure to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 531 to provide continued funding for summer programs for Oregon's students on behalf of the WESD.

Our Willamette Promise Program has received funding the last two summers for the Student Leaders Summit offered in partnership with Western Oregon University. In the course of the two programs, they have served 90 students. Priority was given to students from rural school districts, federal opportunity zones, and students from underserved communities.

The Student Leaders Summit is dedicated to closing the opportunity gap for traditionally underserved students in higher education. The event focuses on culturally relevant workshops led by college faculty to help students develop professional skills, understand college transition systems, grow their writing abilities, and other enrichment related to STEM, art, literacy, and leadership. The summit centers around college application and scholarship essay writing workshops. These workshops help students develop their voices and share their stories in scholarship and college application essays. Each student left the Student Leaders Summit with a finished application essay. Participants have reported earning thousands of dollars in scholarship funding.

Additionally, the Student Leaders Summit focused on closing the technology equity gap by providing a MacBook for every participant to use in their post-secondary education. This addressed students' needs around digital equity and ensured that Student Leadership Summit graduates had durable technology to last them throughout college. Continued support of this vital funding would allow our program to expand the number of students served by the Student Leaders Summit. Continued funding allows staff to provide an authentic college-campus experience for underserved students and help them develop a sense of belonging in higher education.

We hope you will support SB 531 to continue and expand funding for Summer 2023.

Please view the video below from the 2021-22 Student Leaders Summit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewcLI71244M>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Brunner'.

Gretchen Brunner (Jan 26, 2023 12:55 PST)

Executive Director of School Improvement Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Whalen'.

Adam Whalen (Jan 26, 2023 12:56 PST)

Coordinator of the Willamette Promise









Letter_SB 531

Final Audit Report

2023-01-26

Created:	2023-01-26
By:	Katie Grauer (katie.Grauer@wesd.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAASVpDZQfc5_jbuV-c8UsQpyJY7kN5pDZ

"Letter_SB 531" History

-  Document created by Katie Grauer (katie.Grauer@wesd.org)
2023-01-26 - 8:06:02 PM GMT- IP address: 71.238.58.232
-  Document emailed to Gretchen Brunner (gretchen.brunner@wesd.org) for signature
2023-01-26 - 8:06:35 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Gretchen Brunner (gretchen.brunner@wesd.org)
2023-01-26 - 8:52:56 PM GMT- IP address: 174.204.193.200
-  Document e-signed by Gretchen Brunner (gretchen.brunner@wesd.org)
Signature Date: 2023-01-26 - 8:55:47 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 174.204.193.200
-  Document emailed to Adam Whalen (adam.whalen@wesd.org) for signature
2023-01-26 - 8:55:49 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Adam Whalen (adam.whalen@wesd.org)
2023-01-26 - 8:56:02 PM GMT- IP address: 198.237.174.254
-  Document e-signed by Adam Whalen (adam.whalen@wesd.org)
Signature Date: 2023-01-26 - 8:56:13 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 198.237.174.254
-  Agreement completed.
2023-01-26 - 8:56:13 PM GMT