



February 16, 2023

TO: House Committee on Education  
FROM: Our Children Oregon  
RE: Support for HB 3144

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Hudson, Vice-Chair Wright, and Members of the Committee,

Our Children Oregon's (OCO) mission is advancing equitable policymaking and whole-child advocacy statewide to ensure our children and youth have what they need, regardless of their race or where they live, to thrive by activating meaningful change for children and families. We collect, analyze, and elevate data and research that, alongside lived experience, drives conversations in support of Oregon's future.

**We support HB 3144 to address the unacceptable inequities in education for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students in Oregon.** According to the ODE Statewide Report Card of 2020-2021, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students had the highest rate of being chronically absent at 47.6%, compared to 11.1% for Asian students and 24.7% for White students. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students also have the second lowest graduation rate at 76.6%, following Black students at 76.3%.<sup>1</sup> Without a specific student success plan and related equity initiatives, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students will continue to experience disproportionate results. We must move with urgency and identify concrete strategies to end these disparities.

HB 3144 fulfills the promises made in 2022 when the state legislature funded a position to support the development of a Student Success Plan for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students. HB 3144 continues that work and puts the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Student Success Plan into law as part of the larger Oregon Student Success Act. The bill essentially allocates the necessary money and resources to implement it including:

- 1 full-time staff working on the implementation of the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Student Success Plan.
- Funding to support community involvement, as well as relevant consultants, facilitators, and experts, in the development of the full plan.
- Providing implementation funds for community-based organizations and other partners to help administer the plan.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/reportcards/Documents/rptcd2022.pdf>

We thank you for your time and efforts to take the necessary steps to address Oregon's educational gaps, especially focusing on the disparities faced by Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students. We urge your support for HB 3144.

From the Our Children Oregon Team,

Ivy Major-McDowall, Policy and Advocacy Director

Jenifer Wagley, Executive Director