

March 1, 2023

To: House Committee on Education  
From: Mauee Donahue Revier, Director of Education and Innovation  
RE: Support for HB 3177

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Wright and Hudson and members of the committee—

My name is Mauree Donahue Revier and I am the Director of Education and Innovation at Columbia Gorge ESD. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 3177, which would give much needed funding to the Educator Advancement Council to continue the critical work in connection with our Regional Educator Networks around the state to engage in meaningful recruitment and retention of the education workforce.

The Dalles is a rural agricultural town about 90 minutes east of Portland in the Columbia Gorge. 4 years ago one of the school district's I support approved the start of a dual language program at one of the local elementary schools. At this time, the enrollment of the school was 425 students, 50% hispanic students and 100% white teachers. The following year, two important things happened: first, the first dual language kindergarten class started; and, second, the first students started at Columbia Gorge Community College's elementary education program. As of today, there are three dual language classes, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd each with a bilingual hispanic teacher. But the exciting part is that there are two student teachers who are part of the Columbia Gorge Community College and Oregon State University Grow Your Own grant completing their practicums at this school. The plan is when the first student graduates from OSU this June, she will teach the 3rd grade dual language class, and when the next student graduates in June 2024, she will teach the 4th grade class. Both women attend school in this district and graduated from the local high school. This is exactly why the Grow Your Own program, coordinated by the Education Advancement Council, is so important: rural communities can grow our own teachers who know our students and families.

I have been mentoring novice teachers in Oregon for about 15 years, most recently with the support of the Columbia Regional Education Network (CREN). It is my experience that no matter how well the teacher preparation programs prepare the teachers, the first two to three years of teaching are tough. Our mentors receive ongoing training and mentoring. Mentors meet with the novice teacher for an hour a week to talk about the novice teacher's successes and challenges, providing the highest quality job-embedded professional development. When novice teachers feel successful, they stay in the profession. What we need now are bilingual hispanic mentors. I know it will happen but it takes time. It takes time to grow our teachers. It takes time to grow our mentors.

In this workforce crisis, where we are constantly looking for avenues to support educators to stay and grow. If we seek to be successful in this strategy long term we must put our resources where we say our values are.

I encourage the committee to support HB 3177 and dedicate more resources to mentoring and the overall recruitment and retention for Oregon educators. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mauree Donahue Revier  
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Columbia Gorge Education Service District