



Harmony Community Campus
7738 S.E. Harmony Road | Milwaukie, OR | 97222
503-594-0650 | www.clackamas.edu/HealthSciences
Education That Works

TO: Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Suzanne Weber, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Jazzy Walker, RN, BSN, CMSRN

Nurse Administrator, Clackamas Community College

Date: February 28th, 2023

RE: Support for SB 523

Dear Senators of the State Committee on Education:

You will hear from many the background and why they support or oppose SB 523 for various reasons. As the administrator of Clackamas Community College, it is essential to provide you with why there is support for SB 523 from CCC and provide you with an action plan of how SB 523 will affect Clackamas students.

The opposing side discusses the need for more clinical space, lack of qualified faculty, lack of nurse educator retention, or inability to accept more students.

Lack of clinical space. While lack of clinical space is a significant issue in Oregon, a community college offering an online RN-BSN program will not affect the clinical space. The RN-BSN online programs do not require clinical hours. All associate-level degree nurses have finished all the requirements they need in the limited clinical space. The RN-BSN program is designed for the working nurse and is focused on Public health/Community/Leadership.

Lack of qualified faculty. Several nurses qualify to be nurse educators. A nurse with a BSN with three years of experience can be a clinical instructor or a nurse associate educator per division 21 from the Oregon Board of Nursing for the ADN program. Most faculty hold an MSN or higher degree within the community colleges. The Oregon Center for Nursing provided data on why nurse educators leave and why qualified nurses do not want to work in nursing education. Low compensation, heavy workloads, lack of collegiality, lack of appreciation, and insufficient mentoring are reasons for nurse faculty shortages. In several ways, colleges with extra resources and funding can improve retention and job satisfaction within nursing education. For Clackamas, as the administrator, I am combating some known concerns regarding the retention of nurse faculty and recruitment of qualified nurses. At Clackamas, I have several

qualified nurses who have their MSN or a higher degree who will be able to help support an online RN-BSN program if SB 523 passes. As Clackamas moves forward, working on retaining our faculty and recruitment is a priority. The option for nurses and advanced practice nurses to teach online will help recruit those interested in nursing education and will attract qualified nurses to provide this level of education. It will increase the number of bachelor-prepared nurses in the workforce. Again, passing SB 523 will not necessarily increase the number of nurses in the workforce, but it will increase our nursing workforce's education level. When looking at increasing the degrees of nurses, it directly affects our community. Hospitals gain magnet status, and our community residents have a nurse with a higher level of education taking care of them in their most vulnerable times.

- The Institute of Medicine (IOM) Future of Nursing Initiative has recommended that organizations like hospitals strive to achieve 80% BSN-prepared nurses by 2020. Only 61-62% of Oregon nurses are educated at the BSN level or higher.

Inability to accept more students. Clackamas did have to go down in our cohort size last year from thirty to eighteen students for the ADN program due to a lack of faculty and clinical space. During this application cycle, CCC received over two hundred and thirty-four applications. Clackamas is going up to thirty-six students this fall for the ADN program. When considering the RN-BSN online program, there is no capped number for the number of students CCC could admit to the BSN program. We do not have to look at the number of clinical faculty we have and the clinical space we would require when looking at increasing cohort sizes.

When reviewing data on how many Clackamas Community College graduates go to some of the local RN-BSN programs, I see a decreasing trend over the last few years. When asking the students what they would like, many of the responses are that they would continue with their BSN sooner if they could stay within their community college home with their cohort. They stated that staying with the same instructors and administrators would be ideal instead of applying and transferring to another school to complete their BSN. Many of our students are using out-of-state RN-BSN online programs rather than continuing with local BSN programs.

The actual question is, why not support SB 523? Community colleges will not take up more clinical space for RN-BSN students. There is no limit on how many students can be enrolled in the RN-BSN program due to clinical space limitations or faculty shortages. If a community college has the faculty numbers to support an online program, why shouldn't they be able to provide a valuable option to their students? The only real reason why not to support SB 523 would be if it would affect an institution's financial gain in the community. There are many ways that community colleges, other RN-BSN programs, and four-year degree BSN programs can work together to continue to partner and share resources. The ultimate focus is our students and our community. When supporting or opposing anything in education, what will benefit students and our community the most?

Thank you,

Jazzmyne Walker, RN, BSN, CMSRN

Jazzmyne Walker, RN, BSN, CMSRN

Clackamas Community College

Nurse Administrator

Jazzy.walker@clackamas.edu

503-594-6032