



March 7, 2023

To: Senate Committee on Education

From: Oregon Education Association

Re: Opposition to SB 48

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the committee---

The Oregon Education Association represents over 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state, from pre-k to community colleges. Our members are classroom teachers, bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, school counselors, community college professionals and more.

On behalf of the OEA, I am writing to express opposition to SB 48, including the -2 amendment filed on OLIS. Our concerns with creating a penalty for school attendance violations is the connection this has to the school to prison pipeline. I want to reference the [Justice Center's September 2020 report](#) that demonstrates with data that truancy approaches to school attendance actually further push students deeper into the juvenile justice system and can be counter to improving attendance rates.<sup>1</sup> We also have seen in real examples from our communities, such as from David Douglas School District, how this approach does not work and actually disproportionately targets communities of color and further compounds harm to students who need supports and could benefit from a trauma informed approach.

Acknowledging that the -2 amendment makes this bill a task force, we do want to share that there have been extensive work groups and research done to discuss the various reasons that students are chronically absent and ways to support greater attendance. I want to reference for the committee two important resources specific to Oregon students on this topic:

1. [Multnomah County's Community Supporting Youth Attendance Toolkit](#), which highlights some great approaches to partnerships within our school system and some applicable worksheets and assessment tools to support implementing these strategies.<sup>2</sup>
2. [Oregon Department of Education's 2019 report](#) from the three-year pilot study regarding trauma-informed practices at Tigard High School and Central High School as case studies for the work.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CSG\\_RethinkingtheRoleoftheJuvenileJusticeSystem\\_15SEPT20.pdf](https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CSG_RethinkingtheRoleoftheJuvenileJusticeSystem_15SEPT20.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://multco-web7-psh-files-usw2.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/CSYToolkit915update\\_1.pdf](https://multco-web7-psh-files-usw2.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/CSYToolkit915update_1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen\\_engagement/Reports/2019-DOED-TIP-Pilot.pdf](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen_engagement/Reports/2019-DOED-TIP-Pilot.pdf)



We hope you will take this information in to consideration as you discuss SB 48.

Sincerely,

Michele Ruffin

Government Relations Consultant

Oregon Education Association