



SB 1002: Supporting Districts with School Safety & Emergency Management
Senate Education Committee
March 24, 2023

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Claire Ranit and I serve as the Emergency Preparedness Consultant on the School Safety & Emergency Management (SSEM) program out of Columbia Gorge Education Service District (CGESD). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 1002, which would repurpose existing funding to continue much needed support for district school safety and emergency management.

Many districts and schools have come to rely on the expertise and support provided through the SSEM program which provides support in preventing, protecting against, mitigating the impacts of, responding to, and recovering from all threats and hazards. To date, these efforts have been supported through federal grant dollars which will expire at the end of this federal fiscal year. The SSEM program, which has been led by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and implemented by five Education Service Districts (ESDs) throughout Oregon, including CGESD, fills a much-needed gap in the important, but limited, school safety and prevention system (SSPS) program created through the Student Success Act and funded by the Corporate Activities Tax.

The SSPS program focuses on implementing regional behavioral safety (threat) assessment teams and supporting schools in developing suicide awareness, prevention, intervention, and postvention plans. While the SSPS program is important work, it has a limited scope of focus and by no means encompasses everything that is needed for robust school safety, emergency preparedness and management. As such, both the SSEM and SSPS programs work collaboratively to provide more robust supports to Oregon schools and capitalize on the experience and expertise inherent within each program.

The SSEM program delivers a variety of supports including but not limited to all threats and hazards site and risk assessments, assessment and development of emergency operations plans (EOPs) and supporting annexes, building community partnerships across schools and first responder agencies, training to EOPs, trauma informed emergency drills, workshops, and running tabletops to full-scale exercises. These resources have been especially important for districts and schools in rural and frontier regions of Oregon. Additionally, this work is done through a lens of equity, ensuring persons of all ability levels are properly supported throughout the emergency management cycle.

Oregon districts and schools are susceptible to being impacted by many different threats and hazards and need the ongoing support provided by the SSEM program which has made a strong, positive impact on the emergency preparedness and management of Oregon districts and schools. I urge your support of SB 1002 for Oregon K-12 schools and districts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments, and I welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Claire Ranit, B.S.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claire Ranit".

Emergency Preparedness Consultant
Columbia Gorge Education Service District