

Submitter: Amy Gray  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB4082

Hello,

My name is Amy Gray and I'm the Director of Programs for Arts in Education of the Gorge, we serve under resourced students in Hood River, Wasco, Moro and Sherman counties in after school and summer learning. I'm writing today to testify in support of HB 4082, Invest in Summer Learning.

It is critical that funding is consistently supporting after-school programs and summer learning. Our staff and children need to be in partnership with public education, and our programs provide that by being rooted in Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

There are many ways our programs provide crucial life skills to help students thrive in the classroom and beyond, below are testimonials from our staff and partnership staff from Wasco County.

"I feel offering the arts in an after school setting is immensely effective and productive for all kids. With art you learn so many valuable lessons in group and individual settings. Kids have had a long day at school and come to us tired and wound up. Giving them time to work with their hands to create, to safely make mistakes, and to creatively solve problems all while having fun is valuable in so many ways. I find myself saddened by the lack of art in schools and amazed at the focus and inspiration it can bring to the kids." -Teaching Artist Molly Holmlund with Arts in Education of the Gorge

"I believe our after school programs are important as it gives kids a chance to process their day and give them something special to look forward to. I think it benefits their sense of self by being and feeling seen, it helps them handle and process their emotions and gives them a more laid back and less structured environment where they can enjoy, engage and express themselves." -Teaching Artist Stephanie Delgado with Arts in Education of the Gorge

"Barnaby (Arts in Ed Teaching Artist) is an invaluable addition to our after-school program. He consistently shows up, goes above and beyond in his lesson planning for our kids. He tailors his lessons to where our kids are at and has a very strong emotional connection with them. IT is much more than learning theater and circus work - rather the kids are attached to HIM and show up on Wednesdays specifically for Barnaby and are excited to go deeper into the next lesson. There is a mixture of singing, dancing and acting. I have personally watched kids who "have a chip on their shoulder" and do not want to participate in any activities, kids who have not felt safe - now shine with confidence being in his presence." Jamie Kerr Site Manager, Chenoweth Elementary School, The Dalles School District

"1. After a day full of physical containment and a lot of concentration and brain activity kids get to be very physically expressive and free.

2. They experience and learn the power of persistence, practice and failure in

developing a range of new skills that are applicable to all skills.

3. The kids are given supported opportunities to cooperate, collaborate, lead, and support others in practical group activities.

4. They get to learn and practice new expressive and communication tools through the arts.

5. They get exposure to arts practices including theatre, circus and visual arts, which they would otherwise not get.

6. We provide a safe space where they can blow off steam and release tensions and frustrations they have experienced through the day.

7. The kids get to interact with different adults from diverse backgrounds, broadening their range of examples, models and ideas about themselves.

8. Kids get to explore and try on different identities for themselves through the use of imagination, play and creativity in structured activities."

-teaching Artist Barnaby King with Arts in Education of the Gorge

Please vote YES on house bill 4082, Teaching using Social Emotional Learning Research brings a transformational energy and love to students so we grow as human beings together in these important out of school time programs we are desperately in need of.