

March 19, 2025

Chair Courtney Neron
Vice-Chair Emily McIntire
Vice-Chair April Dobson
Members of the House Education Committee

RE: HB 2007: Regarding Summer Learning, Declaring an Emergency

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs McIntire and Dobson, and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Lorena Barrera De Ochoa, and I am a Family Engagement Facilitator at Adelante Mujeres. In my role, I have witnessed firsthand the significant impact these programs have on preparing our children and adolescents for a brighter academic future. These programs are critical for the development and success of our youth and are essential to supporting their academic and personal growth. Adelante Mujeres is an organization that prioritizes the education of children and adolescents in the communities of Beaverton, Hillsboro, and Forest Grove.

As a Family Engagement Facilitator, I am here today to strongly urge you to **NOT** support the HB 2007 proposal in its current form.

As it stands, HB 2007 is insufficient to provide the comprehensive support our children need in Oregon. Effective programs combine academic learning with cultural enrichment. While HB 2007 focuses on summer learning with an emphasis on literacy, it does not address the broader and more complex needs of our children within the K-12 system. Concentrating solely on summer learning focused on literacy fails to acknowledge the importance of holistic and developmentally appropriate approaches that support our youth in achieving their academic goals. Furthermore, it does not take into account the value of enriching learning opportunities that foster social-emotional development and encourage lifelong aspirations.

Our children learn not only in school but also in their communities through extracurricular activities such as summer programs and after-school initiatives, like the Adelante Mujeres Girls' Youth Development Program. Extended learning opportunities through extracurricular activities are crucial for our children to achieve high academic results throughout the entire school year. When our children participate in culturally responsive and community-based programs, they experience a strong sense of belonging, build healthy self-esteem, and develop essential life skills. These programs also encourage leadership development, community engagement, and a sense of civic responsibility, which empowers our youth to strive for academic success and personal growth.

HB 2007, as it is currently written, fails to address the importance of extracurricular programs, and this oversight would result in a significant loss for our youth and communities. These programs play a pivotal role in closing achievement gaps and fostering a positive school experience for students who may not otherwise have access to these essential opportunities.

I respectfully urge this committee to revisit and build upon the work of HB 4082 from last year. It is imperative that our representatives follow the guidance and recommendations from workgroups to ensure that our children in Oregon receive the full range of support they need, including both summer and after-school programming, in order to succeed academically and socially.

Today, I ask you to honor the progress we made last year by ensuring a more holistic and comprehensive approach to our children's education—one that not only prioritizes summer learning but also elevates the value of extracurricular programs that are essential to student success.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Lorena Barrera De Ochoa

Family Engagement Facilitator, Adelante Mujeres