



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Roosevelt High School

**Testimony on SB 739 from Roosevelt High School
Hearing Scheduled for March 20, 2019
Senate Education Committee**

Chairman Wagner, Vice Chairman Thomsen and Members of the Committee:

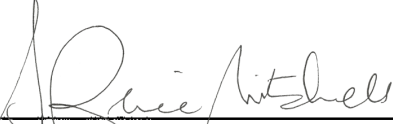
Roosevelt High School, its staff and students, have seen tremendous change and growth in the last several years. During the 2018-2019 school year, we have worked side-by-side with our Oregon Research Schools Network (ORSN) partners using an improvement model to identify and systematically embrace the greatest needs of our students. Through our collaboration, we have collected and analyzed school report card data, teacher perception data, student input, school leadership input and other internal school data to examine our schools' culture, systems and structures to help set goals and determine the focus area and strategies to reach them. While Roosevelt HS has many positive structures in place for students, we learned that RHS students have often experienced traumatic events that teachers and staff have not always been professionally equipped to address. We learned that teachers have been wanting skills and knowledge to help understand how to work with students who have been traumatized. Because of the work through the ORSN, we have been able to start creating a system to help get our teachers the training they need. At the same time, we have also focused on building resiliency in our students, a critical component in addressing their trauma.

We have worked closely with the ORSN Director (Dr. Nancy Golden) and Associate Director (Sol Joye). They introduced us to key faculty with expertise in trauma informed practices and how to implement these practices within our school setting. We have collaboratively investigated the research on successful models of how to implement teacher professional development and examined evidence-based practices in professional development training and leadership. Part of this work included the ORSN supporting the Courtesy Appointment Clinical Professor in attending a national conference on trauma informed practices. We are now working with a leadership team of teachers at RHS to implement effective trauma informed practices by focusing on the concept of resiliency.

Our leadership team is working to develop and implement a number of trauma-informed practices for teachers and staff. These practices include a strategy that will be discussed in testimony, during this committee hearing, that has been very powerful in building student resiliency during this school year. This strategy is focused on student voice and resiliency by training students to harness the power of their own stories about trauma. Then using those stories to inspire and empower other youth. Out of this focus on resiliency came an innovative, student-voice project titled I Am M.O.R.E. (Making Other Resiliency Experiences). The I Am M.O.R.E. initiative allows students to use their voice through art, poetry and drama to help our

teachers and staff understand what their students are going through, and how we can then better support them in building student resiliency.

Since then, Roosevelt students have used their voice to teach the concept of resiliency to RHS staff, they helped train classified staff for Portland Public Schools and they facilitated a training for Portland State University on trauma-informed practices. This work, through our collaboration with the ORSN, is just getting started. Today, we have brought Roosevelt High School student Justice English to read her poem about moving from trauma to resiliency.



S. Renee Mitchell
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Oregon Research Schools Network (ORSN)
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