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To: [JCSS Exhibits](#)
Cc: [Rep KenyGuyer](#); sen.michaeldembrow@public.govdelivery.com
Subject: House Bill 2019: Student Success
Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2019 9:25:19 PM
Attachments: [Closing the Achievement Gap..key](#)

Dear Members of the Joint Commission on Student Success,

When I heard about Oregon's low graduation rate my heart broke.

As a former teacher, school principal, consultant and researcher for over 40 years, it's unacceptable that we've gotten to this point. I've witnessed the constant cuts to education funding, reduction of critical staff, and increased demands and expectations on the system—federal mandates, property tax measures, case law that shapes requirements, special interest groups, facilities that are stretched to their limits. The constant reductions-in-force and increased requirements are taking a toll on our schools.

We are failing our youth.

Taken individually, the requirements may have merit, but there is no true authority which determines how all of these initiatives, requirements, tax measures, special interest groups and laws impact each other and the system which is supposed to serve our youth.

The system is working in a pressure cooker.

When teachers, counselors social workers, music teachers, librarians, PE teachers, art teachers, secretaries, custodians, instructional assistants, teacher mentors, ESL staff, Special Education staff, psychologists, therapists, and nurses kept getting cut, it becomes harder and harder to meet the needs of students, regardless of the staff's effort or dedication.

At Raleigh Park Elementary I worked with staff who always placed the students first. Everyone in our school worked together to make sure student well-being and learning came first. It was painful to see how they were trying to reach each student without the extra supports needed. Children need extra support for a variety of reasons—emotional issues, illness, abuse, hunger, medical conditions, loss or illness of close family members, poverty, and special needs. When the needs of these children go unaddressed, all of the children learning with those children are impacted. When those children receive the support they need to learn, everyone achieves at higher levels.

After I retired from being a principal, I subbed in many Beaverton Schools. I was able to see the impact of staff reductions throughout the district. There simply were not enough qualified staff to make sure that every child received the quality education they deserved.

As a consultant, I work with a group of researchers who know what it takes to make sure every student achieves at a high level. (University of Kansas, Center for Research on Learning) Here's what it takes: (Also see attached slides.)

Infrastructure Supports:

- ~Flexible Scheduling
- ~Planning
- ~Professional Development Time
- ~Smaller Learning Communities

System Learning Supports

- ~Progress Monitoring

- ~Data-Based Decision Making
- ~Collaborative Problem-Solving
- ~Instructional Coaching
- ~Professional Learning

Instructional Core

- ~Motivation/Behavior Supports
- ~Smarter Standards-Informed Curriculum Planning focused on student outcomes
- ~Engaging Instructional Materials & Activities
- ~Student-Informed Teaching
- ~Connected Courses & Coherent Learning
- ~Continuum of Literacy Instruction

Administrative Leadership

- ~Holds vision while telling current reality
- ~Differentiates between technical and adaptive problems.
- ~Designs adult learning processes: builds a learning organization.
- ~Uses Data to leverage forward progress.
- ~Focuses on research validated vital behaviors.

I've attached a few slides focusing on this research so you can see the impact of these components.

Even with all of these components in place, the achievement gap is not totally closed. What will it take?

I've read the House Bill that you've worked on, and I believe it offers a lot of great possibilities to help all of Oregon's youth find success. We cannot afford to lose our youth.

I don't know if the public or business community understands this, but we desperately need more funding in our schools, funding that will increase the professionals who can help provide the intensity of instruction and interventions that students need.

Thank you for all of the time and energy you've dedicated to House Bill 2019. I urge my legislatures to support it and vote for it.

You can make the difference with this bill.

Respectfully,

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