

Hello, My name is Sue Boyes I live in Milwaukie Oregon. I come tonight wearing several different hats. As an elementary school teacher for 25 years, as the parent of 3, a middle schooler with special needs and 2 young adults and finally as a student of Ellie. No matter which hat I am wearing, I beg you to pass House Bill 2019.

My youngest child who is 11 is Gender Non-conforming. Since age 3 she has been excluded, tormented, picked on and assaulted. This bullying has taken its toll, we have done outside counseling and switched schools several times. Sadly, we have had 2 attempted suicides, the first when she was just 5 years old. She tied a jump rope around her neck and jumped off the play structure in our backyard. When asked about it she said " kids were mean to her and she didn't think she would ever fit in". Schools need more mental health, bullying and suicide prevention programs.

As a parent of 2 adult children who have recently entered the Teaching Field... Sadly I feel conflicted.. On one hand, I am proud to have them follow in my footsteps.. However, as a parent I worry about my children's mental health... how could anyone be a teacher for 30 years under the currently stressful conditions???

As a teacher for the last 25 years I have seen Education change more than you could imagine, some positive, some not. My first class had 23 students with a 2 hour assistant and my largest class was 39 3rd graders with no assistant. Overcrowding and class size has been an issue for about 20 years, but it is worse now because the kids have more extreme needs. When I first started teaching, teachers would say " oh, you always have one 'special' kid" But today it's not on 1, it is 5, 6 or even more. These children have unmet needs that are causing major disruptions to learning. Teachers can't help the student having a meltdown and teach the rest of the class. We need more counselors to help the needy children, so teachers can get back to instruction.

They say a picture says a thousand words...and this one does. I have had it on my classroom wall a few years, so I never forget Ellie's lesson. Her picture says;" in a class of 34 kids: who speak 7 languages, with 12 English language learners, 5 TAG students, 7 IEP kids, 9 affected by Trauma, 3 with serious mental health needs, and 7 children of poverty, Teacher... even after 3 months in your class, YOU DON'T SEE ME!! " Hi, I'm Ellie" Please pass House Bill 2019 and reduce class size, so teachers can teach each and every student.