

College of Education

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College of Education
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Re: House Bill 2876.2: Coordinated Comprehensive School Counseling Program
Senate Rules Committee

May 17, 2019

Dear Chair Burdick and Senate Rules Committee,

Since June of 2017, I have served as Dean of the College of Education at Portland State University. In addition, I serve on the Educator Advancement Council along with Sen. Roblan and Rep. McClain. I am also involved in the Educator Equity Advisory Committee and the leadership team for the Oregon chapter of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. For the last 26 years, I have worked as an educator and leader in both K-12 and higher education. As Dean, I currently oversee teacher preparation, leadership and counselor education programs. In the past, I had the opportunity to oversee both social work and education programs in higher education. At PSU, I also have the opportunity to work closely with my colleagues in the School of Social Work to chair of the hiring committee for a new Dean of the School of Social Work. I have a great deal of understanding, as a researcher and practitioner (at multiple levels) about the issues and challenges facing both fields. **My professional knowledge and experience has led me to be deeply opposed to House Bill 2876.2 that would allow school social workers to be hired to perform the duties of an elementary school counselor.**

I was disappointed to learn that Representative Hernandez re-introduced this bill given that this was not the recommendation of the taskforce he previously convened. Representative Hernandez's taskforce was made up of individuals representing the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) School Counseling Education Specialist, the Oregon School Counselor Association (OSCA), the Oregon Association of School Counselor Educators and Supervisors, and the Portland State University School Social Work Program (SSW).

The taskforce's recommendation to Representative Hernandez was that the members of the taskforce would work with the Portland State University School Social Work program to ensure that:

1. School social work curriculum adequately prepared school social workers to perform the duties of elementary school counselors under ODE regulations OAR 581-022-2060 Comprehensive School Counseling Programs and TSPC regulations 581-018-0305 School Counselor License Competency Standards. Oregon's children deserve to have educators in these positions who have demonstrated competence under ODE and TSPC law. HB 2876 allows SSWs to move into positions in Oregon schools for which there has been no attempt to demonstrate the PSU SSW program prepares them to do so.
2. This change to the Portland State University School Social Work program would be conducted in compliance with the PSU Faculty Senate Policies and Procedures.
3. The requirements for SSWs would be comparable to those required of school counselors who are applying for the same position.

In conclusion, HB 2876.2 allows individuals whose educational preparation for the position has not passed the scrutiny of TSPC nor ODE. HB 2876.2 unfairly advantages social workers by allowing them to apply for

a position with considerably less preparation than school counselors are required to have. I believe this could negatively impact career opportunities for elementary counselors. Additionally, it would not serve schools well because social workers simply do not have adequate preparation for these roles. As Dean of the College of Education at Portland State University, I commit to working actively with you and my colleagues in the School of Social Work to find solutions to resolving the challenges that have driven this effort forward. In fact, the College of Education at Portland State has offered to work closely with SSW faculty to ensure adequate preparation of social workers for elementary school counseling roles. I can be contacted via email at mlynn@pdx.edu or via phone at 503-725-9635 if you'd like to discuss the matter with me further. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marvin Lynn", with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marvin Lynn, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor
College of Education
Portland State University