

As a member of the Board of Directors for Serendipity Center and a former Special Education Director, I would like to support the passing of SB5505 and the \$2.8million dollar investment in the expansion of Serendipity's Therapeutic School Program. In every school district, there are some students who have needs that surpass the ability of the district to provide. These students have often experienced trauma and have mental health and learning needs that manifest in behaviors that can compromise the safety and learning of themselves and others. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, Serendipity struggled to meet the increasing needs of school districts because of capacity. With the dramatic increase in stressors and trauma experienced by Oregon families and children since the pandemic, school districts will face unprecedented challenges and will be unprepared to meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable children. The investment in the expansion of Serendipity will increase student capacity, create an equitable school option and integrate trauma-informed practices. Serendipity has a proven record of success for serving children with disabilities and mental health needs. I urge you to pass SB5505 and the investment in Serendipity Center, for the future of our children.

Thank you,
Lori Silverman