



TO: House Committee on Education  
FROM: Stacy Michaelson, Multnomah Education Service District  
DATE: May 11, 2021  
RE: SB 713 – Support

Chair Alonso Leon, Members of the Committee:

For the record, I'm Stacy Michaelson, representing Multnomah Education Service District (MESD). In addition to providing school health services, technology support, outdoor school, and alternative education options for the districts and students in Multnomah County, MESD is also the educational provider in three county juvenile detention centers and three Oregon Youth Authority facilities. Across our six contracted programs, we work with hundreds of justice-involved students each year. Additionally, many of the metro-area students we've served in a correctional setting attend our alternative high school, Helensview School, after completing their sentence.

Many of the students we encounter in the justice system have had mixed experiences with the K-12 system in our state. Nearly 50% of the students we serve at Donald E Long in Multnomah County having been disengaged from school for the 12 months prior to entering the justice system. We know that there is immense value in helping to ensure these students are able to get their high school diplomas or GEDs. And yet, we also know that even those who do are likely to face immense stigma and many barriers associated with their time in the justice system.

It is a weird bind the system puts our students (and others who have been incarcerated) in. We encourage them to get an education to help improve their situation – to ensure they are employable and have opportunities to be self-sufficient. And yet, their opportunities to pursue higher education (or employment) may be limited by their having been in the justice system.

Passage of SB 713 will help guarantee that students who wish to pursue higher education will not face additional hurdles in Oregon because of their time in the justice system. It will help ensure that when our staff encourage students to think beyond high school, there will be no need to temper expectations based purely on students' involvement with the justice system. SB 713 will make clear to everyone that our students are just as deserving of an education as anyone else, and for that reason, we urge passage of the bill.

Thank you.

**Superintendent** *Sam Breyer*

**Board of Directors** *Jessica Arzate ♦ Mary Botkin ♦ Kristin Cornuelle ♦ Siobhan Burke ♦ Michael Durrow ♦ Susie Jones ♦ Helen Ying*

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