



3/1/21

Chair Alonso-Leon and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express the Oregon School-Based Health Alliance's (OSBHA) support of HB 2408. OSBHA works to strengthen and sustain school-based health systems and services across the state in order to ensure that youth are healthy and give them opportunity to effectively learn.

We work with school-based health centers and school districts across the state, have supported the implementation of trauma informed schools, and have long advocated for increased school mental health supports. In our work, we help communities assess and prioritize the health needs of students, and we consistently hear that mental health is the number one priority. A study of how best to support mental health needs of students aligns with all of our work.

With respect, I would like to suggest amending the bill to either shift the work or include a partnership with the Oregon Health Authority, which currently administers funding for school-based mental health services and houses some expertise. Additionally, I believe it's important to ensure that the result is not a one-sized fits all approach and that, given the limited behavioral health workforce and particularly the limited number of bilingual and bicultural providers, services to traditionally marginalized communities are given additional consideration. Providing support for community organizations to participate in the study would be a helpful addition.

I thank you for your consideration and overall, urge you to support HB 2408.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maureen Hinman".

Maureen Hinman
Interim Executive Director
Oregon School-Based Health Alliance