

SB 487 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 1/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to award grants to school-based dental sealant programs so that they may provide oral health care coordination. Directs the Office of Rural Health to provide scholarships and tuition assistance to individuals to enroll in community-college level dental health coordinator programs. Provides matching funds to employers for costs associated with employing community dental health coordinators. Provides rulemaking authority and appropriates funds for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

A dental sealant is a liquid coating applied to the chewing surfaces of molars for the purpose of preventing cavities in children. According to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), most cavities occur in the molars, and school-based dental sealant programs can reduce cavities by 50 percent. Dental sealant programs work with local communities and schools to screen participating children, apply sealants when appropriate, and to refer children for restorative care when necessary.

Based on data reported by Oregon's sealant programs, 32 percent of children screened in 2016-17 were referred for needed restorative care (link to OHA [School Dental Sealant Program](#)). Certified sealant programs are not required to provide coordination of oral health care for students who are screened and determined to need restorative care.

Senate Bill 487 would direct the Oregon Health Authority to fund grants for oral care coordination provided by sealant programs and would direct the Office of Rural Health to fund training for oral health care coordinators and match costs to employ them.