

SB 487 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

Action Date: 03/01/23

Action: Do pass with amendments. Refer to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng).

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Bonham, Campos, Gorsek, Hayden, Patterson

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 1/30, 3/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to award grants to school-based dental sealant programs to 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:

- Effectiveness of school-based dental sealant programs

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Requires that funds be distributed to grantees on a proportional basis relative to the number of schools that a certified dental sealant program serves.

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 2016-2017 were referred for needed restorative care (link to OHA [School Dental Sealant Program](#)). Certified sealant programs are not required to coordinate oral health care for students who are screened and determined to need restorative care.

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