

Submitter: Robert Carus  
On Behalf Of: Serendipity Center Inc  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB633

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Robert Carus. I am a community member of Serendipity Center's Finance Committee, and a retired CPA and former accounting consultant to the Agency. I'm writing to ask you to support a bill that will come up for a hearing in the Senate Education Committee on March 21st. Senate Bill 633 sets aside critical funding for Oregon's highest needs students. The bill would establish special education multi-district collaborative model which promotes the establishment of a network of special education centers in Oregon dedicated to healing our youth who struggle with the most acute mental health and disability challenges.

In the more than 20 years I've been associated with Serendipity, I have seen what a tremendous benefit the educational and therapeutic model employed by the school has been in the lives of its students. These children experience incredible burdens that would have impacted them over the entire course of their lives, except for their affiliation with the Agency. Unfortunately, Serendipity Center can only accommodate a relatively small number of students, and only from a limited number of school districts. This bill would take Serendipity's model statewide, allowing students from all over our state to benefit.

As a strong believer in Serendipity Center's mission and model to provide evidence-based, trauma-informed services to public school students, I support Senate Bill 633. This bill would advance the field of special education and children's mental health in Oregon so that more students will receive an equitable education experience and thrive. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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