

ARTEMIS CONSULTING

Passionate about better health for all and a system to get us there

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Hudson and Wright, and members of the committee:

My name is Diana Bianco and I have spent more than 30 years working alongside organizations, agencies and individuals who want to make the world better by improving health and well-being in our communities.

Last summer, I had the privilege of working with the cross-agency workgroup that developed the recommendations contained in HB 2767.

I worked with Representative Rachel Prusak to convene experts from the Oregon Legislature, the Oregon Health Authority, the Oregon Department of Education, the Alcohol Drug and Policy Commission, the HECC, YDD, COSA, local ESDs and the Oregon Recovery High School Initiative, to identify a long-term, sustainable funding and governance model for recovery schools in Oregon — with a shared goal of helping more students with substance use disorder access the life-saving supports provided by these schools.

The diverse set of stakeholders who came together to think through, analyze, dissect and prepare this piece of legislation was tremendously impressive. Merging health care, recovery and education expertise, we identified an optimal path forward for recovery school programming in our state. The workgroup's comprehensive set of recommendations was presented to the Oregon Legislature in the fall and used to create the policies in HB 2767.

Sensitive to the ongoing education funding concerns in Oregon, this bill ensures that funding for recovery schools comes from an ongoing, growing account created by the Student Success Act and designed to help underserved students — just like our students recovering from substance use disorder.

The full workgroup recommendations were submitted to this committee as written testimony and will offer additional insight into the policy on the table before you. The central recommendations are to:

- Give the Department of Education oversight of qualified recovery schools
- Set minimum standard for qualified recovery schools – related to educational licensing, recovery school programming and educational outcomes
- Create an advisory committee within ODE to support the pilot program of recovery schools
- Create a sustainable funding allocation from the Statewide Education Initiatives Account that would make up the cost differential for these students, who are more expensive due to the additional mental health, recovery and transportation supports required for them to be successful.

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503.799.4015 diana@artemispdx.com

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I want to say a special thank you Rep. Prusak, who submitted a letter for the record and who understands, as a health care expert, the immense need for supporting students in recovery.

Without her support and the support of Senator Wagner, who both championed a one-time investment in recovery school programming in 2022, we would not be before you today.

Thank you for your consideration of this thoughtfully designed legislation. Please contact me if there is additional information I can provide.

Sincerely,

Diana Bianco

Principal, Artemis Consulting

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