

Representative Susan McLain
Oregon House District 29



March 22, 2023

Members of the House Committee on Education

Re: Support for House Bill 3595

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Hudson and Wright, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of **House Bill 3595** today in the House Committee on Education. HB 3595 establishes the **Juvenile Justice Education Fund for the purpose of paying for educational services provided to youths in the Youth Corrections Education Program (YCEP) and the Juvenile Detention Education Program (JDEP)**. Additionally, it establishes the target funding levels for the programs and outlines which factors must be considered when the Superintendent of Public Instruction enters into a contract with an education service district or school district to provide educational services to youths in either the YCEP or JDEP programs. **This bill is essential to ensuring adequate funding for educating youth in the juvenile justice system and I believe it is one of the most critical education investments we can make.**

Youth who enter the YCEP or JDEP programs are often disconnected from school long before their arrest. These programs are necessary to guarantee that students have opportunities to re-engage in their education, and earn a high school diploma, which ultimately increases their odds of bypassing the justice system as adults. Without these programs, the life trajectory of an incarcerated youth might look very different.

Without necessary funding, many of our smallest sites, generally those located in rural parts of the state, are unable to provide a full-time teacher unless they receive extra money in addition to the State School Fund. Over the last several years, the Oregon Department of Education has exhausted the program reserves, which have historically been used to supplement sites that lacked funding for a full-time teacher.

HB 3595 offers a stable funding formula for calculating how much money is necessary to adequately fund JDEP and YCEP providers. Additionally, it establishes a nimble process for distributing funds based on local needs, not a one-size-fits-all formula. The stakes for these students are high, and we owe it to Oregonians to reduce recidivism rates by providing youth in custody with an adequate education. This is one of the most powerful tools available to us and HB 3595 will ensure we do just that.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to reach out to my office with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan McLain".

Representative Susan McLain