

Good afternoon Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Hudson and Wright and members of the House Education Committee.

My name is Belle Cantor, I'm the Senior Program Officer for Education at the Oregon Community Foundation.

On behalf of Oregon Community Foundation, I'm here to convey our strong support for summer and after-school programs via HB 4082.

Through our multi-million-dollar, multi-year Out of School Time Initiative as well as a key partner for the State of Oregon in administering the summer learning program in 2021, we have first-hand knowledge of the importance that summer and afterschool programming has on student success.

The research on the benefit of high-quality summer learning and afterschool is unequivocal. Children from communities that have historically been marginalized from the education system including youth of color, youth in under resourced rural communities, youth experiencing disability, and youth navigating poverty often do not have the same access as other children to the learning and enrichment that comes from well-designed and implemented summer activities. High-quality summer learning programs offering a combination of academics and enrichment can help youth build strong and trusting relationships with peers and adults, develop a sense of belonging, support academic engagement and achievement, and build resilience through cultural identity.

Research by the National Academies of Sciences, Rand, Brookings and many others support the critical role access to high quality programming has on student success. A RAND meta-analysis of summer programming found growth in math and reading for students that participated in high quality, consistent, year after year summer programming. The gains were especially true for youth from low-income families and for students who need additional supports to master academic content. The National Academies of Sciences doubles down on the positive impact that summer programming has on academic, health, social and emotional, and safety outcomes for youth. They also stress the importance of having communities central to the design, planning, and implementation of programming. Partnerships in summer learning between community programs, tribes, and schools are fundamental to success for students.

To ensure our marginalized youth are making critical gains, it is essential to charge an inclusive, experienced workgroup with developing a long-term, sustainable plan for funding high-quality summer and afterschool programs. We must look to the future of a well-planned, consistent program that schools, community programs, Tribes, and other providers of summer and afterschool programming can rely on from year to year. The success of the youth that our educational system is leaving behind depends on it.

Thank you.