

Submitter: Mitzi Bauer

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2729

Dear Chair Neron and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mitzi Bauer, and I'm a member of the North Clackamas school board for the past 8.5 years. I'm writing in support of HB 2729, which provides critical resources that youth and families across Oregon need now.

In the North Clackamas school district, we have school-based health centers at each of our 4 traditional high schools. The centers are always busy and serve students onsite so they do not have to leave campus and get immediate care for mental and dental health and required physical exams for activities. We also serve the families that feed into that high school area. We know these programs are successful with feedback directly from students, staff and families and high participation. At this time more than ever we are seeing increased mental health needs as students are worried about current harsh language around immigration and gender. We need more resources at high schools across our state; this is an equity issue as it shouldn't be just for those districts that can pass a building bond and partner with community resources at hand.

HB 2729 provides evidence-based resources that will be quickly available for schools to support youth mental and physical health. A study conducted in Oregon found that youth are 10-21x more likely to seek mental health support at a school-based health center (SBHC) and that SBHCs that increased mental health capacity were 12% less likely to report a depressive episode; 16% less likely to report suicidal ideation; and 18% less likely to report a suicide attempt

I support this bill because it provides critical and lifesaving resources for our youth and families especially at this time of unknown future supports from federal programs.

I urge you to vote yes on HB 2729.

Thank you,  
Mitzi Bauer, North Clackamas school volunteer & school board member