

Submitter: Brooke Warren

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3357

Dear Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

I am a middle school social studies teacher in Beaverton School District. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 3357, which seeks to ensure school staff injuries are properly documented so that workplace safety improvements can be made.

In November 2024, I did a room clear to prevent the other 27 students in that class from listening to the verbal abuse one of their classmates was yelling at me. After giving the student a quiet, individual instruction, the student began yelling at me, including calling me "bitch" as I walked across the room to call for an escort. After students cleared the room and more abuses were yelled, I waited for five minutes for help to arrive (our head secretary and our drug and alcohol counselor responded since our VP was working with a police officer, investigating a threat made to the school). The three of us went back into my classroom and while the counselor tried to deescalate the student, the student cursed at me: "I hate that fucking bitch; she's a bitch; I don't want to be in this stupid class; I don't want to have to look at her fucking face," while students lingered outside; I hoped they were not in earshot.

This is far from the first time I've been on the receiving end of verbal abuse by a student, including from this particular student. I'm sharing this with you to put context around the importance of class size and educator caseloads and how these relate to safety in the classroom.

A lack of services and staffing to support ALL of our students results in frequently disrupted class time for ALL students. After this incident happened, as has been the case each time I was on the receiving end of verbal abuse, I was rattled, shaken, and unable to teach my class for the rest of the period. And... the larger the class size, the more difficult these situations become.

I spent 45 minutes writing up the incident and talking to other educators needed to help process next steps. I met for an additional 30 minutes for our first reentry attempt (with the student and three other adults, during which the student used the word "fuck" three times). Since the first reentry meeting was unsuccessful. I spent another 30 minutes in a second reentry meeting. When non-educators think of teachers using plan time, they may think of us grading, planning, making copies, etc. All of those things are true. And with 204 students on my caseload (177 of whom I

teach in an academic class and am responsible for reporting on academically), my 600 average minutes of plan time equates to 3.38 minutes to spend per student per week. When one hour and 45 minutes of that time is used to follow up on behavior issues like the one I've described, I'm forced to make tough decisions: do I teach poorly prepared lessons to my students the next day or spend my evening working from home to prepare; do I complete a quick check-off of students' recently turned in work rather than provide meaningful feedback; do I hope that things are okay with a couple of students who've been worrying me lately because I don't have time to contact home; do I skip the intermediate lesson I know many students need and just keep pushing forward because I don't have time to create anything extra? And these questions arise after time spent following up with just one student's disruptive behavior.

HB 3357 is about improving school safety for everyone—staff and students alike and allowing teachers the time and support they need to teach the students who deserve a quality education.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brooke Warren

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Beaverton School District

Proud member of Beaverton Education Association