

Submitter: Erika Peterson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

I have spent the last 5 years in classrooms with 14 and 15 years old students as a health teacher. My class is a year long and when students complete my class they are completing all of the health credit they need to graduate from high school. For many of my students my class is the only health education they will receive in high school. I take my job seriously and work tirelessly to make sure my students have the knowledge and resources they need to be ready to make safe and informed choices when they become adults.

In order for my students, the young generations of Oregonians, to be ready to make safe and informed choices when they become adults they **MUST** be able to access a variety of instructional materials available to them at school. My students, our young Oregonians, are not a monolith and are subject to a variety of experiences related to their own individual identities.

I strongly encourage the passing of the senate bill to protect my students rights to a quality education that actually sets them up for success when they become adults and enter the 'real world'.

Any discrimination of materials for curriculum, as well as library books, emboldens the members of our community who do not want students, especially students with specific marginalized identities, to access their right to a free quality education. Discriminating against curriculum materials on the basis of their acknowledgement of different kinds of people and their experiences (queer and trans people, people of color, people with disabilities) explicitly sends the message to students that the only way they can experience a full, happy and healthy life to conform to the dominate culture even when that dominate culture has created harm for them or their families as a result of different aspects of their identity. These ideas perpetuate inequality and unfair advantages some students have over others.

My students, and all students, deserve the ability to access materials that align with their own values and allow them to exercise their first amendment rights.

Please help ensure our Oregon public schools are safe places of curiosity and critical thinking for EVERY student. Please pass SB 1098.