



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

My name is Cynthia Branger Muñoz, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Education Association (OEA), which represents over 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state. Our members include school nurses, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, mental health professionals, and other school-based health professionals who provide essential care to Oregon's students every day.

I urge you to support HB2423, which would establish the School-Based Health Professionals Taskforce to ensure that licensing board regulations appropriately reflect the realities of working in schools.

Oregon's school-based health professionals operate in a unique setting—distinct from hospitals and clinics—where they serve diverse student populations with varying and often complex health needs. However, current licensing board rules do not always account for the realities of providing health services in a school environment. This misalignment creates unnecessary barriers that can limit a professional's ability to provide care efficiently and effectively. HB2423 would address this by creating a formal space for licensing boards to review and discuss how their regulations function specifically in school settings.

One example of this issue can be seen in speech-language pathologists and occupational therapists, who must navigate licensure rules designed primarily for clinical settings. In many cases, these rules do not acknowledge the collaborative, educational, and developmental nature of school-based practice, leading to unnecessary confusion and administrative burdens. Similarly, school nurses and mental health professionals often face duplicative or conflicting regulations that were not designed with school environments in mind.

HB2423 is not about workload—it is about ensuring that school-based health professionals are regulated in a way that makes sense for their actual work. When licensing requirements do not reflect the realities of their practice, professionals face additional hurdles, and students ultimately lose access to the critical services they need.

By establishing a task force to examine these issues, HB2423 will help ensure that licensing standards align with the work being done in schools, improve retention and recruitment of school-based health professionals, and support the long-term success of Oregon's students.

On behalf of OEA, I urge your support for HB2423. Thank you for your time and consideration.