

Submitter: Ilene Stark  
On Behalf Of: HB 3004  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3004

Crisis intervention, de-escalation strategies, conflict resolution and mediation, violence and crime prevention, and connecting students with mentors are proven and evidence-based strategies that improve the lives of students, giving them the support and skills needed to engage positively in conflict and proactively in facing the challenges that may be present in their lives. Creating schools in which teachers and students are trained in these approaches creates a schoolwide and classroom culture in which conflict and extreme upsets can be treated with empathy and the skillset to achieve conflict engagement and resolution. It empowers students to use these skills in everyday life. Many students that are struggling and presenting highly challenging behaviors do not have positive role models in their lives; mentors offer an example of a different way to be in the world while providing support and a stable, caring relationship. This will reduce the number of students dropping out of school, which offers more promise for their futures. As someone who implemented a countywide violence prevention program, with young children, I can affirm that children and youth are extremely capable and responsive to learning these skills while growing their ability to be empathic, the foundation of nonviolence. It would be effective and life changing if children and youth were in environments where they could continue to grow and use these skills throughout their public-school education. This will positively impact schools, families and communities by reducing crime, bullying and hurting of self and others and keeps youth off the prison pipeline, which is much more expensive in the long run, and can have an even greater negative impact on youth and society. I urge you to pass House Bill 3004 to give students a greater chance to succeed in school and life, finding work and/or higher education and becoming contributing members of their families and communities.

Thank you, Ilene Stark  
Milwaukie, Oregon