

March 24, 2025

TO: House Committee on Education  
FROM: Ali King, Our Children Oregon  
SUBJECT: Support for HB 2359

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

My name is Ali King and I am the Policy and Advocacy Director for Our Children Oregon (OCO), a statewide organization that champions equitable policies and opportunities for every child by leveraging data and research. The Children's Agenda, convened annually by OCO, brings together more than 135 organizations statewide to create a holistic legislative agenda dedicated to improving the wellbeing of Oregon's children, youth, and families.

I am writing today in support of HB 2359, requiring start times for high school to be at or after 8:30 AM.

As a coalition of child and family advocates, educators, administrators, parents, researchers, and policy experts, we have seen firsthand the benefits later start times have on students' well-being and academic performance. Lack of sleep is also linked to increased rates of anxiety and depression in teenagers. Later start times can help reduce the mental health challenges that many high school students face, which, in turn, can lead to fewer behavioral issues. It can also reduce the rates of teen car accidents, which are often caused by drowsy driving.

In my own personal experience, when my daughters were in high school, even though they were both high-achieving and motivated students, they struggled with the early start time, and I saw it impact their stress levels, moods, and attention spans. Research shows that adolescents naturally experience shifts in their sleep cycles and they are often not able to fall asleep early, which makes early morning start times particularly challenging.

In summary, later start times can contribute to the overall health of Oregon's students, resulting in better attendance and academic achievement. Based on this research, many states across the country are exploring and implementing later start times.

We appreciate the work you do to support Oregon's children and families and we strongly urge you to vote **yes on HB 2359** so Oregon students can benefit from the myriad of positive effects of a later start time.

Sincerely,



Ali King

*Policy and Advocacy Director*

*Our Children Oregon*

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