

Representative Susan McLain
House District 29



RE: Support for House Bill 2359

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

I write today in support of **House Bill 2359**, which would require that high schools begin regular courses no earlier than 8:30 a.m. I filed this bill at the request of the Multnomah Youth Commission, Portland and Multnomah County's official youth policy body. I am proud to support this student-led effort as Chief Sponsor of HB 2359 and would like to acknowledge the impressive work that the students have done on this bill.

Students have unique—and important—perspectives to share in the legislative process. In their schools and classrooms, students directly experience the impacts of education policy decisions; they have valuable insight to offer on the strengths and challenges of our education systems. As policymakers, it is critical that we engage students as partners in education policy decision-making. Youth leaders and advocates have identified early-morning start times as a priority issue for students across Oregon and collaborated with Legislators, stakeholders, and the Department of Education to develop a remedy that is thorough and practical in its approach.

HB 2359 elevates student voices and aligns Oregon schools with evidence-based practices to promote youth health and wellness. Since 2014, the American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended an 8:30 a.m. or later start time for middle schools and high schools. **When youth are well-rested, their academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being improves.** As a teacher of over 42 years, I know that a good night's sleep is essential to student success and that our students deserve a system that provides optimal learning environments..

With HB 2359, youth leaders have created an opportunity for meaningful engagement on an issue directly affecting Oregon students. I kindly ask my colleagues to consider this student-led initiative.

Sincerely,

Representative Susan McLain