

Submitter:	Peter Buckley
On Behalf Of:	Myself
Committee:	House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	HB3941

Chair Neron and Members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Peter Buckley and I am a former member of the Oregon House of Representatives, serving from 2005 to 2017 in the same district the wonderful Pam Marsh now represents. In the 2007 session, I served as the Chair of this very committee and then was appointed to serve as the House Co-Chair for Ways & Means for the following eight years of my time in the legislature.

Since leaving the legislature, I have worked with Southern Oregon Success, a collaboration of all levels of education, health care, mental health care, human services, public safety and workforce development in Jackson and Josephine counties. It is because of my time in the legislature and my time with Southern Oregon Success that I strongly support HB 3941 and the development of Community Schools in our state.

The bottom line is that the needs of our fellow citizens--basic needs--are increasing well beyond our state budget's ability to meet them. And our K12 school districts are on the front line, experiencing this in painful and damaging ways. When children struggle to have their basic needs met, they struggle with school attendance, and they struggle with learning. K12 educators are placed in the impossible situation of trying to teach and be social workers at the same time.

We need to let teachers teach and have social workers and community-based organizations do the social and human services work needed for children and families to thrive.

The Community Schools model allows us to do just that. And this is not a new idea--Community Schools have been around for decades. It's the need for Community Schools that has now become so clear. Community Schools excel in family engagement. They provide the community partnerships that are essential to meet the basic needs of Oregon families.

Most of you, I'm sure, are familiar with School Based Health Centers, which provide medial and behavioral health care right at schools, improving attendance as well as academic outcomes. We have focused on School Based Health Centers in Jackson and Josephine counties to the point where we now have the most School Based Health Centers per capita of any region in the state. The Community Schools model

takes that same approach--providing services where children and families are--and expands it in family-centered ways that work for whatever community steps forward to create one.

The model makes so much sense and results in such better outcomes that the collaboration I work for, Southern Oregon Success, has committed to supporting any school or schools district in our region who chooses to move to Community Schools.

And one last point--with funding and support from the federal government so unpredictable now, it is more crucial than ever for communities to work together to make sure our children have the chance to thrive. Community Schools offer a proven model for us to work together to make sure basic needs are met and we can finally get the education outcomes all of us want for Oregon students.

I appreciate your time and consideration, and I strongly encourage your support for HB 3941.