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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2251

My name is dr doreen dodgen-magee - psychologist - author & researcher & have studied the impact of technology on human health for 25 years. I've spoken with parents, teachers, and students in districts across Oregon and the country over the last 15 years.

We've long known that the brain wires together where it fires together.??If you expose the brain to a foreign language, it builds the neural pathways necessary to speak and understand it.

We also know that practice makes proficient. Rehearse a piece of music and you become skilled at playing it.

When you put these two realities together, and consider today's K-12 students, a few troubling realities comes into focus.

First: Devices, and the digital experiences they invite children in to rarely cause firing in the prefrontal cortex of the brain. This means over wired circuitry in regions relating to task switching and stimulation seeking and less neural wiring in regions managing focus, emotional regulation, and deep critical thought.??Second: the presence of phones in all areas of life means that children are more skilled and proficient navigating digital spaces than they are fully embodied ones.

You've heard about the research so i want to highlight what I learned while hosting discussions at the Oregon Youth Leadership Summit on the topic of how technology is impacting high school student's lives.??These 200 young people, who reflect every region and demographic of our beautiful state, are aware that constant multi-tasking, uninterrupted social media exposure, and rampant access to short cuts to learning (think Google searches over critical thought and analysis and AI over independent creation) is taking a toll on:

- 1) their ability to focus on one thing at a time...a task they believe would help them learn and feel better.
- 2) their safety and security, as well as their flexibility and adaptability, in social and educational settings.
- 3) the sense of embodied community that healthy learning is predicated on.

4) their mental health...something that they know is crucially tied to their ability to learn and thrive.

Even students are aware of these costs and are ready to try something new.

This bill assures these, and all Oregon students, get to learn in classrooms free from digital distractions and rich with opportunities for embodied, in-person learning.