

Submitter: Lisa Harnisch
On Behalf Of: Specific Salem
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4079

Good morning, Sponsors of HB4079,

We are writing to express our individual support for Oregon House Bill 4079 with the -5 amendments. We start not with our own words, but with the words of our student advisor to the Salem-Keizer Public Schools Board, Jolee McMahan.

"We believe implementing procedures like [those described in HB 4079] is vital to keep families safer and informed...And if these very traumatic experiences were to happen in our school district, everyone should be informed. Several students have shared with me how ICE is impacting the whole community and their individual lives. There has been an emotional outcry...Many agree that a lot of change needs to happen and students need to know that teachers, staff, and the district leaders...are willing to provide students and their families with visible support. For a growing number of students, the ability to be fully present in the classroom is being hindered by a preoccupation and worry they feel because of ICE."

In our capacities as Directors of the Salem-Keizer Public Schools (SKPS) Board, we have seen firsthand the fear and anxiety that the current immigration enforcement activities have created for our students, families, and community. While Salem-Keizer Public Schools has procedures in place that are closely aligned to the -5 amendment of HB 4079, we believe codifying these as a state-wide standard provides an added assurance to all of families that we stand with them.

Our schools must remain safe and welcoming places where our students can learn and grow without fear for themselves and their family members. HB 4079 provides the transparency that maintains the trust between our schools and the communities they serve. Additionally, by ensuring that schools notify the community about the presence of federal immigration enforcement officers on campus, we are taking a stand for the rights and dignity of all students. This bill helps to create an environment where students can focus on their education without the constant worry of potential disruptions due to immigration enforcement activities.

In our individual capacities as individual board members, we urge you to support House Bill 4079 and to advocate for its passage. By doing so, we can uphold the values of transparency, trust, and inclusivity in our schools and create a safer and more supportive environment for all students.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chair Cynthia Richardson

First Vice Chair Lisa Harnisch

Second Vice Chair Karina Guzman Ortiz

Director Mel Fuller

Student Advisor Jolee McMahan