

*Est. 1883*



E D U C A T I N G   T H R I V I N G   S T U D E N T S

## OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

*Education Center*

*520 N.W. Wall Street*

*Bend, Oregon 97703*

February 24, 2025

Dear House Committee,

I write on behalf of Bend-La Pine Schools, in support of House Bill 3079. This legislation will provide critical resources for our youth and have a far-reaching impact on the families, educators, and communities who work tirelessly to break the cycle of houselessness and ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed.

Here in Central Oregon, we feel this need acutely. Many families with children of varying ages struggle to access the support they need, particularly when youth fall outside of the specific K-12 eligibility criteria. By extending funding to include a more comprehensive age range, this bill will provide much-needed assistance to a broader range of youth and their families, and allow for preventive supports before students enter school as well as transition supports for those leaving our system. By addressing the needs of the entire family unit and at the transition points in and out of K-12 public education, we create a stable foundation that enables young people to focus on their education and well-being, without the constant disruption of housing insecurity.

This bill's positive effects will also extend beyond individual families to benefit the state's economy. When children and youth experiencing houselessness are supported with stable housing, access to education, and necessary social services, they are more likely to succeed academically and, ultimately, contribute to the workforce as productive, engaged members of society. This, in turn, reduces future public expenditures on social services, healthcare, and criminal justice interventions, leading to long-term savings for the state. Investing in our youth today is an investment in Oregon's future economic growth and prosperity.

For our teachers, House Bill 3079 provides much-needed relief. Teachers across Oregon, and certainly here in Central Oregon, are often tasked with balancing their responsibilities as educators with the challenge of addressing the complex needs of students experiencing houselessness. With increased funding and resources, educators will be better equipped to focus on what matters most—teaching and learning, while these additional resources provide for partnerships and services beyond the classroom. Teachers will have more support to meet the diverse needs of their students, and students will have the opportunity to engage more fully in their education. By supporting this bill, we are ensuring that our educators can devote their time and energy to teaching, rather than managing the crisis of housing instability.

By expanding funding and resources for youth experiencing houselessness, we are not just addressing immediate needs; we are setting the stage for a more prosperous, equitable Oregon. I urge you to support the passage of House Bill 3079 and help ensure that every child, regardless of their circumstances, has the opportunity to succeed. Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to the well-being of Oregon's children, families, and communities.

Sincerely,

Kinsey Martin  
Executive Director of Policy, Advocacy, & Equity  
Civil Rights & Title IX Coordinator  
FAN and McKinney-Vento Supervisor  
Bend-La Pine Schools