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State School Task Force
c/o Jan McComb
Legislative Coordinator
Oregon Department of Education

Dear State School Fund Task Force:

My name is Kendra Wasson and I live and work in Washington County. I am the Principal at PACE (Positive Advancement Center for Education) in Forest Grove, OR. PACE is a school under the purview of Northwest Regional ESD. PACE serves children through the Long Term Care and Treatment (LTCT) grant, and the students at PACE have significant disabilities.

Most of the students at PACE have experienced trauma, abuse and multiple placements (one student has had 13 placements in the last two years). All of our students have a developmental disability (Autism, Intellectual Disability, etc.) And, they each experience severe emotional/behavioral disabilities as well, (i.e. Bi-polar Disorder, PTSD, Fetal Alcohol Effect, Depression, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, etc.). Our school is the most restrictive setting offered along the special education continuum.

In the last two years, PACE has adopted PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) and begun the process of adopting Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS). Taken together, we have made significant improvements across the program. During the 12-13 school-year we were able to decrease restraints by 32%. For the 13-14 school-year, we currently have a 27% reduction. That's a total of 59% reduction of restraints in less than two years. In addition, the students are making academic gains. While nearly all of our students come to us behind grade level, one student has improved 4 grade levels in his reading skills in the last 2 ½ years. PACE is focused on academic growth, and safe, pro-social behavioral outcomes.

I am writing you to ask that you please prioritize these students who are at the highest risk. They need adequate and stable funding. By funding the LTCT grant with adequate funds, and LTCT students at 3X, we will be able to provide high quality programming to our most vulnerable citizens.

Thank you for your time and for considering my request

Sincerely,

Kendra Wasson M. Ed.
→ Principal of PACE