



PETER COURTNEY
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TESTIMONY BY SENATOR PETER COURTNEY
SB 4
MAY 3, 2017

Chair Doherty, members of the House Committee on Education, thank you for hearing my testimony today.

My name is Peter Courtney. I am a State Senator. I live in NE Salem.

I am here to testify on SB 4.

Regular physical activity is important for our kids. It keeps them healthy, it keeps them happy, and it keeps them engaged.

Physical education helps children maintain a healthy weight and build strong bones. It reduces the risk of obesity and related conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. It has even been shown to reduce anxiety and depression, leading to better mental health.

Studies show that regular physical activity at school benefits children's academic performance. Kids who are active have higher test scores and grades. They pay better attention to academic tasks. They have better memory and recall. Active children are even less likely to act out in school.

This is why it is so important that we ensure that physical education is being taught in Oregon classrooms.

Which is why, 10 years ago, the legislature passed HB 3141. This established PE minute requirements for k-8 schools. At least 150 minutes for elementary schools, and 225 minutes for middle schools.

We gave school districts 10 years to implement these requirements. They go into effect this July. And according to a recent review, only 10% of Oregon schools are currently meeting these requirements.

While I am disappointed in these numbers, I also realize that we would be hurting our schools if we let these requirements go into effect in July.

Instead, PE advocates and the schools have been working hard to come up with a solution. This bill lays out a specific timeline and steps that schools and ODE will have to take to meet PE requirements.

This is a solution that will ensure that Oregon's students will have the PE minutes they need and deserve. I hope you will join me in supporting this bill.