

Lawmakers propose bill to address bullying, suicide in schools

By Claire Withycombe
Oregon Capital Bureau

Four days before Chloe Wilson took her life, the 14-year-old from Eugene was meeting with her legislators at the state Capitol, eager to push for more recognition of people with mental illnesses. She died Feb. 26, 2018.

Nearly a year later, her father and stepmother, Jason and Roxanne Wilson, returned to the Capitol in Chloe's honor to push for more robust suicide prevention policies in Oregon schools.

Her family said the funny, friendly girl who dreamed of becoming a surgeon was depressed and anxious, and bullied by other kids.

"I wanted to give you a face to this issue," Roxanne Wilson testified, holding up a portrait of Chloe smiling in an apple-red shirt.

The Wilsons and other parents, students, teachers and mental health experts came to the Capitol this week to say Oregon's kids are in crisis. Lawmakers are listening.

Eighteen senators and representatives have sponsored a plan to direct nearly \$2 million per year to address violence and bullying in schools. They call it the "Oregon Safe To Learn Act."

The state would help schools screen for potential



Oregon Capital Bureau/Claire Withycombe

Jason Wilson holds a photo of his daughter, Chloe Wilson, who died from suicide in 2018.

violence, promote the state's school safety tip line and create programs aimed at preventing suicide, harassment and bullying. The idea is to reduce those incidents.

The act would pay for 15 employees at the Department of Education to lead that work. Those employees would help school districts with prevention programs and help coordinate schools with mental and behavioral health care providers. It would also help school and education service districts to establish teams to assess threats to student safety.

Those teams would, under the proposed law, also develop intervention plans and connect students and families with local resources and support.

In an interview, state Sen. Rob Wagner, D-Lake Oswego, the chair of the Senate Education Committee, said lawmakers should check back next year to see whether those measures are effective.

"I think it's not just dropping money and being like, 'OK, have fun, do whatever you want with it,'" Wagner said, "Honestly, the Legislature is realizing this is a crisis, and we want to make sure that we're having oversight of those resources."

The proposal has broad backing, from pediatricians to police and Gov. Kate Brown. It's the product of years of work by a group of police, educators and mental health experts under the auspices of a gubernatorial task force on school safety.

Some advocates and lawmakers question the finer points of the program, though.

Sarah Lochner, deputy director of government relations for Multnomah County, worried how the state would prevent kids of color from being targeted by the program.

"We are concerned about

who will be involved in assessment teams," Lochner wrote in testimony to the House Committee on Education. "There are many documented discrepancies with race by law enforcement and school systems in Oregon and we need to make sure these discrepancies will not exist within this system."

In 2018, the federal Government Accountability Office found that in public schools black students, boys and students with disabilities were significantly more likely to be suspended or expelled.

State Rep. Cheri Helt, R-Bend, a longtime Bend-La Pine School Board member until last month, was moved to tears by the testimony Feb. 6. She said central Oregon lost 15 children to suicide in 2017.

In that area, she said, a suicide prevention specialist in Deschutes County works with local schools.

"This program that you're proposing has five suicide specialists, so that means they're going to have a much broader area," Helt told Dave Novotney, who helped lead the group that developed the Oregon Safe To Learn Act, during a public hearing Feb. 6. "I would say our one in our county is already overworked and struggling."

BRIEFLY

Apply for scholarships by March 1

Oregon students should apply for privately funded scholarships at oregonstudentaid.gov by the deadline of 5 p.m. March 1.

Oregon students may explore over 600 scholarships and apply for up to 40 with just one application, and there is no cost to apply. Scholarship funds are available for graduating high school seniors, college undergraduate and graduate students, GED and homeschooled students, community college and vocational school students, single parents

returning to school and more.

In addition to the scholarship application, students should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA) to be considered for federal and state financial aid, including grants and loans.

The ORSAA is Oregon's alternative to the FAFSA for undocumented students, including students who have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status. OSAC uses data from the FAFSA or the ORSAA to determine students' eligibility for the Oregon Promise and the Oregon Opportunity Grant and

numerous scholarships. Information from the FAFSA is also used to determine eligibility for federal aid, including the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Direct Loans and Federal Work-Study.

For further information about deadlines and eligibility for the Oregon Promise and the Oregon Opportunity Grant, visit oregonstudentaid.gov.

Wells Fargo awards grant for foreclosure-avoidance counseling

Wells Fargo Housing Foundation has awarded Community Connection of Northeast Oregon a \$3,000 grant for their Housing Resource Center for work on foreclo-

sure-avoidance counseling.

Community Connection provides counseling to homeowners at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure. Their certified foreclosure intervention and default counselor counsels homeowners on options and strategies to retain ownership of their homes.

This includes available programs for loan reinstatement and mortgage payment reduction. Also included is financial capability counseling, which involves current and projected budgeting, credit report review with options and strategies to improve score, money management and debt repayment plans.

Last year, Community Connection's efforts in foreclosure avoidance counseling saved homeowners a total of \$448,732.65 and saved 38 homes from foreclosure.

OBITUARIES

Wayne Lissman

Wayne Lissman, 94, died Jan. 12. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 16, at LaFollette's Chapel in Burns. A luncheon will follow at the Burns Elks Lodge 1680. Contributions in memory of Wayne Lissman can be made to the American Legion, Harney County Post 63, in care of LaFollette's Chapel, P.O. Box 488, Burns, OR 97720.

Virginia M. Moore

Virginia M. Moore, 93, of John Day passed away Feb. 6 at Blue Mountain Care Center in Prairie City. A graveside service will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 16, at the Canyon City Cemetery. Arrangements have been entrusted to Driskill Memorial Chapel. To leave an online condolence for the family, visit driskillmemorialchapel.com.

About Obituaries

News obituaries of 300 words or less are a free service of the Blue Mountain Eagle. The paper accepts obituaries from the family or funeral home. Information submitted is subject to editing. Obituaries submitted to the Eagle with incorrect information may be corrected and republished as paid memorials. Obituaries longer than 300 words may be published as paid memorials. Send obituaries by email, office@bmeagle.com; fax, 541-575-1244; or mail, 195 N. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845. For more information, or to inquire about a paid memorial, call 541-575-0710.

GRANT UNION STUDENTS OF THE MONTH — JANUARY



Aidan Broemeling
Grade 12
Parents: Karen and Don Broemeling



Donovan Smith
Grade 11
Parents: Kerry John Smith and Robin Herberger



Peyton Neault
Grade 10
Parents: Cooper and Kimberly Neault



Paige Gerry
Grade 9
Parents: Ryan and Sami Gerry



Jasmine Bryers
Grade 8
Parent: Lisa Hunter-Kennedy



Abbie Justice
Grade 7
Parents: Ken and Julia Justice

CORRECTION

Information submitted for the obituary of Charles Mulcare published in the Feb. 2 edition of the Eagle stated he died Jan. 16. Mulcare died Jan. 27. The Eagle regrets the error.

Michael B. DesJardin
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Katee Hoffman
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A man wakes up in the morning after sleeping on an ADVERTISED BED, in ADVERTISED PAJAMAS.

He will bathe in an **ADVERTISED TUB**, shave with an **ADVERTISED RAZOR**, have a breakfast of **ADVERTISED JUICE**, cereal and toast, toasted in an **ADVERTISED TOASTER**, put on **ADVERTISED CLOTHES** and glance at his **ADVERTISED WATCH**. He'll ride to work in his **ADVERTISED CAR**, sit at an **ADVERTISED DESK** and write with an **ADVERTISED PEN**. Yet this person hesitates to advertise, saying that advertising doesn't pay. Finally, when his non-advertised business is going under, **HE'LL ADVERTISE IT FOR SALE.** Then it's too late.

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The family of Lori Palm would like to extend our gratitude to Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home and Cremation Services for her exceptional professionalism, thoughtfulness, sincerity, attention to detail and courtesy. Words cannot express how thankful we are that you helped in our time of loss. We highly recommend your services, God Bless.

- The Raileys and The Cancillas

Last Week's Temps

John Day	HI/LO
Tuesday	28/20
Wednesday	27/14
Thursday	31/10
Friday	33/15
Saturday	37/18
Sunday	28/13
Monday	38/27

24/7 FORECAST

AUTOMATED: 541-575-1122

ROAD CONDITIONS: 511; TRIPCHECK.COM

NOAA WEATHER RADIO FOR JOHN DAY

162.500 MHZ

WEATHER FORECAST FOR THE WEEK OF FEB. 13-19

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
Some snow	Rain and snow	Mostly cloudy with snow	Cloudy and snow showers	Snowy	Partly sunny	Cloudy
41	44	37	35	34	35	41
36	30	26	24	18	17	23