



**Oregon School Employees Association**

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## **Joint Committee on Student Success Testimony in Support of HB 2019**

**Submitted by Tim Stoelb, President of the Oregon School Employees Association**

Chairs and members of the committee, on behalf of the 15,000 members of the Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA), I urge you to support House Bill 2019 to determine the adequacy of education in the state.

Schools in Oregon have been suffering setbacks since the 1990's. It takes very little effort to see that Ballot Measures 5 and 50 has had a devastating effect on education in our state. Years of disinvestment have hurt our students and faculty and led to overcrowded classrooms; schools without nurses, librarians, guidance counselors and supports to ensure children's well-being; deteriorating school buildings; and unhealthy, unsafe environments.

Time and time again we hear elected officials say that children are important, but that is not reflected in spending priorities. The Ways and Means Committee budget proposal this year is yet another disappointment. Oregon knows what the funding should be. Our Quality Education Model calls for funding levels that should be approximately \$11 billion in this next biennium. Falling \$2 billion shy of that figure is nothing more than status quo. This does nothing more than force education entities to battle among themselves for their little slice of the budget pie and solves absolutely nothing for education overall.

Just think what we could accomplish if funding was at an appropriate level. We could bring back programs and electives that had been scaled down or eliminated over the years. We could bring back counselors, school nurses, additional classified and certified positions to help balance out the workload. Most importantly, we could offer exciting and challenging classes designed to peak curiosity and cause students to want to attend school and ultimately improve attendance and graduation rates.

Our students deserve the quality education that they so rightfully deserve and we, as Oregonians, need to make sure that happens. I urge you to support HB 2019.