

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Student Success:

I am a kindergarten teacher in Beaverton and I am begging you to make an investment in Oregon's future by supporting bill HB 3427. Over the past 5 years I've seen significant increases in students' needs, yet my classes sizes have been increasing. Why? *Oregon does not have stable education funding!*

More and more families are in crisis. Families require 2 incomes to provide basic needs. More children are in daycare. The number of homeless children continues to rise. Children are entering school with lower academic skills, and greater behavioral concerns, yet we continue to expect more from them academically and socially in the classroom. As such, the children need *more* support, including *smaller* class sizes, expanded pre-K education, SEL support (social & emotional learning), and additional aides/staff for lower (K-2) grade levels.

Are you aware that children with lagging skills cannot qualify for additional (SPED) support until they fall 1+ years behind? With more staff we could help children *before* they fail, rather than waiting until they fail, repeatedly, and *then* providing support. If our education system was properly funded, children with lagging skills could receive better support to **prevent** failing! It sickens me to know that with solid funding and proper support, these students could be on their way to success, *not* failure, in a short time.

Consider a student that falls 1+ years behind in elementary school. How can we expect that child to feel good, make up the lagging year, *and* succeed, by the time he/she graduates? What if we took that same student, and provided those same resources, when the lagging skills *first appeared*? Most likely the student would *not* fall 1+ years behind. Most likely the student would *feel* and *be* successful. Which student do you think would be most likely to graduate from high school? If it was *your child*, which support would you want?

You have the power to make Oregon a PRO-active education state, rather than a RE-active state.

You have the power to help adequately fund Oregon's education.

PLEASE support Bill HB 3427. Give our children, *our future*, a chance for success. Fund schools consistently and adequately, as an *investment* in Oregon's future.

I'm counting on you to do the right thing. An investment in education is an investment to a brighter future for *all* of Oregon!

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