

Dear Committee Members,

I have spent two decades as an educator in the Oregon education system. I am a product of the schools in District 13J. The unstable funding of our schools is creating a ripple effect that is causing more damage and trauma than is being recognized by our governing bodies. Here are just a few:

The inability to retain new, talented teachers. Either because we do not offer wages that match the costs of living near their schools, or because of the uncertainty that their position will be present from year to year.

The low graduation rate

The burn-out, worry and trauma experienced by our veteran, highly-qualified teachers from the uncertainty of their retirement, possible pay freezes or pay cuts that make it very difficult on families to plan for the future, send kids to college, or keep up with the costs of living.

High class sizes that make it difficult to plan curriculum specific to the needs of individual students. The needs of which could be academic, social and emotional, or English language development. All these students used to get support from teachers who specialize in these needs and were in addition to the classroom teacher. No more.

We are tired of being guilted and shamed by phrases like: "just make it work, don't you care about your students?" WE DO CARE. Which is why we have to make the hard decisions to speak out and protest.

Thank you,
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