

Dear Committee,

*Please include these comments in the official record for HB 3427.*

I want to let you know how important it is to the future of our state that our children's education is fully funded. An INVESTMENT in education can and will make a difference for kids in Oregon. I have experienced first hand what budget reductions look and feel like. I had 40 kindergarteners in my classroom during 2010. I can promise you, that it was frightening. Both the superintendent and the head of HR had to see for themselves what that looked like. They were both shocked at the sheer volume of small people crammed into a classroom. Kindergarteners talk A LOT. 40 of them at once is overwhelming. Once they observed what 40 kindergarteners actually looked like, they split the class to the reasonable size of 20. Children simply can't concentrate with so many other students to distract and interest them. We must make sure we don't ever make the mistake of underfunding again. We need to keep class sizes around 20 in elementary school. More than that is insane. The only way to do that is to make an investment in education so that we can keep class sizes down and students can realize their full potential. Thank you!

Kari Downey

3rd Grade Teacher

Chehalem Elementary School

School phone: 503-645-8060