

Testimony in support of HB 3263 - School Libraries, April 24, 2019
Hearing Room D, 3:00 p.m. House Committee on Education

Chair Doherty, Vice Chairs Alonzo Leon, and Helt. Representatives Hernandez, Neron, Sollman, Reardon, Reschke, and Wallan:

For the record, my name is Mark Hardin. I am a licensed library media specialist, in my 34th year of continuous service in Oregon school libraries. I currently serve as librarian to 750 amazing students, 53 dedicated teachers, and more than a dozen support staff at HB Lee Middle School in Portland's Reynolds School District. I am also a member of the Oregon Association of School Libraries and serve on that organization's library advocacy committee. I am here today to speak to you about the importance of HB 3263, currently awaiting consideration by the Oregon Legislature. The mission of this bill is simple: to recognize library information skills as essential at every level of our K-12 schools and to move current legislation and related OAR language into one integrated statutory statement, thereby simplifying and clarifying already existing legislative rules and definitions. This bill's purpose is to help local school districts in their consideration of the steps needed to restore long-neglected and fractured library information programs.

Over the past few decades, I have witnessed an erosion of school libraries in Oregon. Our numbers have fallen from 800 to 158. With each local or regional economic burp, a few more licensed librarians dropped from schools across the state. Along with those folks went the budgets for which they advocated, the information literacy they taught, and the powerful relationships they forged across buildings, districts, and curricula. Librarians are a key integrating and mediating factor in schools. When they are lost, so are valuable life-long learning opportunities. Classroom teaching becomes more isolated, resources become more scarce, and students lose a valuable life-line to the world. After the loss of licensed librarians, many schools have tried to bravely soldier on with unlicensed library assistants, but in the absence of teaching, libraries devolve into a sort of holding zone for children during the school day. This model falls far short of the

definitions of a “strong school library program” found in Division 22-2340.

All across Oregon, school districts click the Division 22-2340 compliance box, assuring their communities that they have provided a strong library program. But, you need look no further than your own local school districts to see the vastly inequitable and unbalanced mess that local control and budget shortfalls have wrought. In this room alone, we have representatives from communities with no licensed librarian listed for any school. But, one of you serves a district where every school site has a licensed librarian - **and** an assistant. Like most Oregon schools, no one in this room has neighbors whose children receive the recommended QEM per-capita of \$16-40 per year for library materials. But some of our neighborhood schools allot close to \$10 per child. Now, I can't imagine anyone here telling a child you wouldn't in a million years let them have a book. But at 3/10ths of a penny per year, for 9,000 children in one of your districts that's exactly how long it would take to buy each child a single book. A million years.

Today, we stand a chance to put things right. We can begin the gradual process of restoring school library programs, with licensed librarians and library assistants, with adequate budgets to rebuild current, culturally relevant collections, and with technologies that support multiple modes of learning and expression for all students. This can't happen over night. But it won't take a million years. Restoring funds and staff to school libraries won't be cost free. But, remember, the money needed to support school libraries was taken from them in the past. It is not a “new” programmatic demand. And, if by some magic greater than Harry Potter's we could restore all librarians and material budgets, we estimate the cost would not be greater than 5% of the proposed JCROSS budget; a relatively small amount to restore valuable instruction and educational support for every child and every teacher in every classroom across the state. We urge you to help us in the opportunity before us.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mark Hardin, School Librarian

Testimony Notes - HB 3263 Informational Hearing Hearing Room D, 3:00 p.m. April 24, 2019

*Below are specific data given as examples of inequitable school library staffing and support in Oregon school districts.
Data are derived from the 2018-19 QEM report and Division 22 assurance reports posted by various school districts in January 2019.*

Margaret Doherty (chair) HD35 - Tigard

Tigard-Tualatin - 1 district media specialist, 5.5 assistants for 15 regular school sites -
(Tigard only added a district specialist after a citizen complaint process)
\$\$ varies by site, and averages below QEM \$4.56 per cap
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Tigard Assurance Report

<https://www.ttsdschools.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=12218&dataid=15887&FileName=Report%20to%20Community%20Checklist%20Jan%202019.pdf>

Teresa Alonso Leon (vice-chair) HD22 - Woodburn

Woodburn - 7 media specialists in 7 regular school sites, 2 assistants for the 7 sites -
(Woodburn shares 1 high school library with multiple programs on one campus)
\$\$ varies by site, and averages far below QEM at \$0.98 per cap
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Woodburn Assurance Report

<http://www.woodburnsd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/January-15-2019-Board-PacketREV.pdf>

Cheri Helt (vice-chair) HD54 - Bend

Bend-LaPine - 5 media specialists in 5 school sites, 23.24 assistants for 29 regular school sites -
(Bend LaPine additionally supports libraries in alternative & charter school sites)
\$\$ varies by site, and averages below QEM \$9.89 per cap
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Bend LaPine Assurance Report

https://www.bend.k12.or.us/application/files/1115/4947/7613/2019_Division_22_Assurances.pdf

Diego Hernandez HD 47 - East Portland (Centennial,
David Douglas, Reynolds)

Centennial - .5 district media specialist, 6.44 assistants for 9 regular school sites -
 \$\$ varies by site, and averages below QEM \$7.11 per cap
 District now reports not yet meeting Division 22-2340

Centennial Assurance Report

<http://csd28j.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CSD-Division-22-2019.pdf>

David Douglas - 1 district media specialist, 9 assistants for 13 school sites -
 \$\$ varies by site, and averages below QEM \$9.03 per cap
 District reports meeting Division 22-2340

David Douglas Assurance Report

<https://www.ddouglas.k12.or.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Division-22-2018-19-Report-to-Community.pdf>

Reynolds - .5 district specialist, 4 school media specialists, 11 assistants for 15 school sites -
 \$\$ is consistent across district, but averages far below QEM at \$1.68 per cap
 District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Reynolds Assurance Report

<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicItemDownload.aspx?ik=43684012>

Courtney Neron HD26 - Aloha, Beaverton, Hillsboro,
King City

Beaverton - 1 district media specialist, 52.66 assistants for 51 school sites -
 \$\$ varies by site, and averages below QEM \$10.17 per cap
 District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Beaverton Assurance Report

<https://www.beaverton.k12.or.us/dist/Documents/Division%202022%20Assurances%201718.pdf>

Janeen Sollman HD30 - Hillsboro

Hillsboro - 1 district media specialist, 24.27 assistants for 33 regular school sites -
 \$\$ varies widely by site, and averages far below QEM at \$1.46 per cap
 District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Hillsboro Assurance Report

<https://www.hsd.k12.or.us/cms/lib/OR02216643/Centricity/domain/68/accountability%20documents/HSD%20Division%202022%20Assurances%202-1-19.pdf>

Jeff Reardon

HD48 - Happy Valley

North Clackamas - 3 media specialists, 12.91 assistants for 20 school sites
\$\$ varies by site, and averages far below QEM at \$0.58 per cap
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

E Werner Reschke

HD56 - Klamath Falls

Klamath Falls City Schools - No library staffing is reported for 6 schools with 2,746 students -
\$\$ varies by site, and averages far below QEM at \$0.003 per cap
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Klamath Falls City Schools Assurance Report

http://www.kfalls.k12.or.us/departments/fedProg/ODE_Div22_AnnualReport.pdf

Klamath County - No media specialists are reported, 11.55 assistants for 20 school sites with
6,301 students -

Like Klamath Falls City Schools, and averages far below QEM at \$0.003 per cap
District report not available, but 2018 reports meeting Division 22-2340

Klamath County School District Assurance Report (2018)

<http://www.kcsd.k12.or.us/SIB/files/20180216090431.pdf>

Kim Wallan

HD6. - Medford

Medford - 4 media specialists, 17.35 assistants for 17 school sites
\$\$ varies by site, and averages below QEM at \$8.83 per cap
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Medford Assurance Report

<https://www.medford.k12.or.us/cms/lib/OR01915738/Centricity/Domain/229/Division%2022%20Assurances%20Jan.%202018.pdf>

Forest Grove - No media specialists are reported, 3.24 assistants for 9 school sites
\$\$ varies by site, and averages \$0.007 per cap
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Forest Grove Assurance Report

[https://www.fgsdk12.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?
uREC_ID=1129381&type=d&pREC_ID=1633343](https://www.fgsdk12.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1129381&type=d&pREC_ID=1633343)

Redmond - No media specialists are reported, 3.82 assistants for 12 schools
\$\$ varies by site, averages far below QEM at \$0.65
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Redmond Assurance Report

<http://redmond.k12.or.us/files/2019/01/Agenda-Packet-3.pdf>

Baker - No media specialists are reported, 2.5 assistants for 6 schools
\$\$ varies by site, averages below QEM at \$12.33
District reports meeting Division 22-2340

Baker Assurance Report

<https://4.files.edl.io/e3ae/02/27/19/211955-3556678b-89d5-4fa7-a1a7-1f10007a4753.pdf>