

**To:** Chair Alonso Leon, and Members of the House Committee on Education on behalf of the Oregon Small Schools Association

**From:** Michael Carter, Oregon Small Schools Association Executive Director

**Date:** march 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

**Subject:** House Bill 2330 The Oregon Small Schools Association(OSSA)supports HB 2330, which removes the sunset on the Small School District Supplement Fund, more commonly known as the Small High School Grant, and the sunset on funding for foreign exchange students living in dorms at five of Oregon's school districts.

### **Small High School Grant**

About 80 districts (out of 197) receive additional funding through a modest Small High School Grant in the State School Fund. This is a carve out that provides \$5million a biennium (\$2.5 million per year) to these mostly small, rural districts to help support their students. During the first Special Session of 2020 this provision was given a sunset date of July 1, 2021 in SB 1607.

Per student costs are naturally higher in schools with fewer students, and small districts struggle to provide similar opportunities to those in larger districts. The Small High School Grant allows districts with one or more small high schools to offer a diverse programming that otherwise would not be available, including college and scholarship advising, career counseling, and technical skills training. Each of these programs gives students from rural Oregon some of the same opportunities as their peers in larger districts. The challenge of having limited funding to offer a variety of programs at small high schools never goes away and deleting these two sunsets will secure a funding mechanism that small school districts have really come to rely upon. The OSSA also supports the addendum increasing the small correction county number from the current limit of 8,500 students to 9,500 to better serve some of the districts in the state affording these small population counties and the opportunity to grow a bit in the future without penalty.

### **Dormitory School Funding:**

A small number of OSSA districts rely on dormitories to house foreign exchange students, including Burnt River, Mitchell, Paisley, Spray and Ukiah. Dorm schools increase diversity and enhance the quality of education delivered within the schools, and through these programs local students experience an up-close and vastly different perspective of world events, history, culture, government and more. Removal of the sunset will ensure these school districts are able to continue counting foreign exchange students living in dormitories on their total student population count.

“Every student in Oregon deserves the best possible education no matter if they attend school in the Portland area or Lake County in Southeastern Oregon. No matter if their graduation class has 400 members or 4, each and every one of them are important to the future of Oregon.”

2019/2020 OSSA Exchange Student Enrollment: (These 42 students are the latest numbers available because of the COVID-19 Crisis). •Burnt River 10•Mitchell 8•Paisley 8•Spray 13 •Ukiah 3

Thank you and please feel free to contact me with questions, 541-947-3347 or email me at [carter.michael@lakeview.k12.or.us](mailto:carter.michael@lakeview.k12.or.us)

**Please Support House Bill 2023    Thank you for your consideration.**