

## Testimony for Ways & Means Road-Show Hearing

Good afternoon Co-Chairs Steiner-Hayward, Johnson, Rayfield, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sara Schmitt, I am a 2nd grade teacher, currently serving as the President of the Beaverton Education Association, representing almost 3,000 licensed educators in the Beaverton School District.

I am here today to urge you to appropriate at least \$9.6 billion to the State School Fund.

Leading up to the 2019 legislative session, members of the Joint Committee on Student Success took a “road show” tour of the state which resulted in historic, equity-focused investments in Oregon students - the Student Success Act. And yet, 2 years later, at a time when our students' needs are even greater, your proposed State School Fund budget would significantly undermine the benefit that districts are getting from the Student Success Act. By funding the SSF at \$9.1, you will essentially be eroding 50% of the funding in the Student Investment Account grant.

Funding at \$9.1 billion would mean a \$20 million loss to the Beaverton School District. Even at \$9.4 billion, Beaverton would stand to lose \$8 million in funding, which is equivalent to a loss of almost 90 teachers, counselors or other professional educators.

Now is the time to double down on investments that will meet students where they are.

Funding schools at \$9.6 billion is essential if schools are going to be able to provide our students with what they need: individual attention from teachers, adequate access to counselors and mental health professionals, support for credit recovery and on-time graduation, well-rounded education with hands-on learning experiences, and a focus on social and emotional learning for our youngest students who started their school careers during the pandemic.

Educators are ready to get our schools and our students back on solid ground, but it will take long-term solutions to achieve the schools our students deserve. I urge you to appropriate no less than \$9.6 billion to the State School Fund.