

Ways and Means, Oregon Legislature 4/21/21
Angela Bonilla

Hello, and thank you for allowing me time to speak. My name is Angela Bonilla and I've worked for Portland Public Schools for almost 7 years, all at Title I schools as a bicultural, bilingual educator in our Spanish Immersion program. I am here to advocate for fully funding K-12 schools at the no cuts level of \$9.6 billion and keeping our funding within our public schools.

As I am sure you all know, this year has been difficult. Many Oregonians have lost loved ones, income, housing, and stability. They have struggled to juggle work and support their children who were learning from home. Online learning was a band aid solution, one which made very clear how our lack of funding disproportionately affected our most vulnerable community members; It is hard to learn independently as a 6 year old if your babysitter is an older sibling who also has to learn online.

Governor Brown came to my school on our first day of Hybrid instruction. She asked me and a few other educators what will help close the achievement gap. I told her, "the first step is fully funding education".

Combined, the public schools of Oregon are the largest employers in the state. We need to keep funding within our public schools. We learned this year that nothing compares to in person instruction when it is an option; it's why the governor pushed us to open on an accelerated timeline. This is more evidence for why we should not move any public school funding towards for profit virtual learning platforms.

This year's pandemic and comprehensive distance learning has shown us and the rest of the country what educators already knew: Public schools are crucial to not only our students but every person, system and economic process in our community. This pandemic has taken a lot away from us, but it has also given us an opportunity; The opportunity to envision and create the schools all students deserve by fully funding our public education system. Thank you.