



Eugene School District 4J
200 North Monroe Street
Eugene, OR 97402-4295

April 22, 2021

Dear Ways and Means Committee Members,

The Eugene 4J School Board has identified school funding as its highest priority for advocacy this legislative session so we are writing to urge the Legislature to fund our schools at \$9.6b to maintain current service levels.

We finally have students back in our schools and are planning to expand the days and hours to a regular school day in the fall. As we welcome students back in person, we are first greeting them with care and connection. We are also noticing the social emotional, mental health and learning needs of each student and providing individual supports and resources to meet needs as they are identified. We know that for many students, recovery from a year of remote learning and social isolation will take time and continued additional resources.

Two years ago Oregon passed the Student Success Act, which gave public schools, the hope of building back quality education after years of insufficient funding. However, it is very disappointing to see the current proposed budget for the 2021-2023 State School fund to be an amount that cannot sustain current services in K-12 schools. This will ultimately translate to a reduction in staff and/or instructional time, which limits what we can offer students. A reduction is especially devastating at a time when the needs of our students are greater than ever and schools find themselves in the all too familiar place of needing to do more for students with less resources.

We urge the Ways and Means Committee to recommend increasing the allocation in the State School fund to \$9.6b, the level where we do not need to make reductions.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Mary Walston, 4J School Board Chair