



# PHOENIX-TALENT SCHOOLS

EXCELLENCE *for* EVERYONE

## The Phoenix-Talent School District Supports HB 2739

The Phoenix-Talent School District supports HB 2739 and strongly encourages other districts and members of the Oregon Legislature to do so as well.

The Phoenix-Talent School District is not only an agricultural community sandwiched between two larger and more wealthy districts; we are also a district that is in the process of recovering from a devastating fire that nearly destroyed the very towns that make up our district boundaries. 100% of our students qualify for 'no charge' breakfast and lunch through the Community Eligibility Program (CEP), and many of them are still displaced from the fires that took their homes. Fortunately, we are not a district or community that gives up easily. We are determined to push forward, thrive and rise, but to do so we need the support of our state and legislators.

As you know the State School Fund (SSF) is the primary source of funding for K-12 public education and represents Oregon's largest budget investment. However, you must understand how important it is to have funding that not only meets the current needs of our students, but needs of the near-future as inflation and other rising costs further eat up funding.

Current Service Level (CSL) for the State School Fund estimates are significantly lower than the funding needed to maintain current services and stability in our schools. This is unacceptable and cannot be accepted by any of us who believe that our children's education and future is the backbone of our state. For some families in urban areas, where there are other schooling options, this may be a problem that they can mitigate, but for rural schools such as ours, with families that do not have such options, we are left struggling to fill the funding gaps ourselves. As we continue to rise from the literal ashes of our communities, we simply cannot endure a reduction in funding.

Please support HB 2739 so that there is an accurate calculation of the roll up cost of K-12 Education in Oregon, a transparent and collaborative CSL Committee that is inclusive of educators, school officials can be created, and allows the Legislature to improve the overall CSL estimation process.

On behalf of the Phoenix-Talent School District, our resilient families, and the many other rural school districts that wage a continuous fight for more funding and support, I urge you to support HB 2739 and help us rise again.

Regards,

Brent Barry  
Superintendent