

Dear Senate Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my unwavering support for **Senate Bill 3**, requiring future planning, personal finance, college/ career readiness, tax filing skills, and other relevant content in our curriculum as a graduation requirement. As a teacher who has had the privilege of teaching 10th-12th graders some of this crucial material in my AP economics and Government/ Civics classes at Lake Oswego High School, I can attest that this state is not adequately preparing our students for the rigors of the “real world” in many of the above stated content areas. The way the current content standards are written and enforced, my colleagues and I can get away with giving our students a week or two of pretty meager personal finance material and then “check the box” and move on to other stuff, without any accountability that the students actually learned anything. The kids whose parents have the “advantageous” social and cultural capital will teach them these crucial things, and our most vulnerable students will be left to fend for themselves. Is that really the meaning of equitable education?

Personal finance classes provide students with crucial life skills that will serve them well beyond their academic years. Our students need to learn how to manage their finances effectively, save for their futures, and avoid the pitfalls of debt and financial instability. These courses provide them with the knowledge and tools necessary to do just that. Furthermore, personal finance classes are highly relevant to our students' lives. Many of them will soon be entering the workforce, starting their own businesses, or pursuing higher education. These courses prepare them for the financial decisions they will face in these endeavors, giving them a competitive advantage and setting them up for success.

These courses have even personally helped me- I remember as a 9th grader growing up in Michigan, spending a week learning how to do taxes by hand, using 1040 forms, which was something we had to show we could do in order to graduate. This skill came in really handy when I had my first job at 16 and was able to do my own personal taxes with little more than my W-2 and a tax booklet they provided at the library! Fast forward to a couple years ago, when I had a student say to me in class “*Mr. Eizyk- why are you teaching us how to do taxes, I'll just get my accountant to do it for me!*”. I laughed out loud, but again, this was Lake Oswego, and the kid was probably right. Unfortunately not all of us can afford our own accountants, so we must all learn how to do this stuff ourselves.

In short, personal finance classes are essential to our curriculum and to our students' overall development. I urge our lawmakers to pass SB3, to continue supporting these courses, to make them a permanent fixture in our curriculum and finally, to fund this program. Requiring every student to take this type of class will not be free, but the cost of ignoring it is too high of a price to pay.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Eizyk  
Teacher, Lake Oswego High School  
2019 Oregon Council for Economic Education's Teacher of the Year