

Submitter: Maree Beers
On Behalf Of: Mapleton School parent and Financial Beginnings
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB3

Good morning (afternoon, evening),

My name is Maree Beers and I am writing as a financial literacy advocate and educator. Part of why I do this work is as a direct response to students and their parents wanting a bill exactly like this to be introduced to better their students' lives. Specifically, financial education at a young age could directly impact how successful or not a teenager and young adult can be REGARDLESS of profession. Good personal finance skills are instrumental to navigating life in America the way our society and economy is currently structured.

More importantly, I am writing as a BIPOC mom of 2 students living in a very rural part of Lane County. I am very involved in my kids' and their friends' lives and I can see how financial stability affects each one. Most of these high school students know what I do for a living and they constantly ask me personal finance questions (like gross versus net on their paychecks, thoughts on investing, buying a car outright versus purchasing with a loan etc.). They also ask me questions they are troubled by. Because many families are secretive about money, when it is talked about, it is often in a negative way (so-in-so's car is getting repossessed, don't use credit because it will only get you into trouble, etc.). These youth ask me real questions that align with their specific goal setting and future planning.

It would be wonderful if this is part of the required curriculum, rather than relying on self-motivation, or family support to solely teach these skills. Of course, self-motivation and family support are also instrumental in helping students navigate their futures, but this bill could definitely help inform the process and provide at least some measure of life skills training--especially for those who do not get it at home. This could also allow for some very exciting and meaningful community partnerships.

This "learning lessons the hard way" of my generation is not something we should pass on to our youth. Don't get me wrong, some lessons are learned the hard way, but our students should have the chance to make informed decisions (or mistakes) with relevant knowledge and tools, and not get backed into a corner because we didn't prepare them and provide the information needed to navigate their life path. We should be breaking these barriers down as much as we can, because there are some other huge ones our youth still have to face. We should be providing the tools to help. A life skills credit would be great to assist in that.

Kindly,

Maree B.

- Program manager (Financial Beginnings, Oregon)
- Mapleton School District community member
- Mom