

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Portland State University
PO Box 751
1810 SW 5th Ave
Portland, OR 97201

Oregon Legislative Assembly
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

28 February 2023

Re: Support for HB2609

Dear Members of the House Committee on Education,

I am writing in support of HB2609 which will limit the impact of TSPC's fees to educator preparation programs (EPPs) for use of the agency's services. TSPC's fee is based on the number of license applications received from an EPP. Since we are one of the largest education preparation programs in the state, this fee disproportionately charges PSU for educating and graduating a large number of teachers and administrators. Moreover, the fee is only applied to in-state EPPs while out-of-state providers who are doing business in Oregon do not have to pay the TSPC fee.

The COE has already objected to TSPC's fees to EPPs for several reasons, some of which I have outlined below.

I. State Goal: Oregon's governor has prioritized a goal of diversifying the educator workforce, and TSPC has supported EPPs in ways to admit more priority populations as identified by Senate Bill 1545. Charging EPPs to use TSPC's services directly contradicts this state goal by increasing the financial costs for teacher candidates in EPPs.

Further, TSPC's executive director, Dr. Tony Rosilez, has made it clear that his top priority is to ensure the quality of education for Oregon's K-12 students. Charging EPPs, the very programs which train teachers to teach k-12 students, runs counter to this stated top priority.

II. Barriers: In order to diversify the educator workforce, Oregon is focused on reducing barriers to priority populations who want to enter the educator workforce. EPPs, as primary sources of new educators, are deeply invested in reducing barriers.

In January 2022, HECC released a series of Equity Briefs which provided data on challenges and opportunities for BIPOC college students. In summary, HECC stated,

One way to close equity gaps in education is to invest in student outcomes. Research shows that nationally and in Oregon, increasing student financial aid increases successful completion of postsecondary programs. However, *Oregon lags in per capita funding of postsecondary education and training for both students and institutions.*...

HECC and other stakeholders acknowledge the critical role of reducing barriers for priority populations and/or low income students. The Educator Advancement Council's 2020 Educator Equity Report also

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Portland State University
PO Box 751
1810 SW 5th Ave
Portland, OR 97201

spoke to eliminating barriers in educator pathways, noting that multiple barriers exist in our work to diversify Oregon's educator workforce:

Changing such experiences for students of color in Oregon schools requires ongoing efforts from local and state agencies, educator preparation programs, and school districts to identify systemic and structural barriers that may impede diversifying the educator workforce in the state.

TSPC's plan to charge EPP fees to use the agency's services runs counter to Oregon's stated goal to reduce and eliminate barriers, including additional financial costs, in order to diversify our educator workforce. The key takeaway is that as with raising license application fees, adding costs to students in teacher preparation programs is an additional barrier. Given that Oregon is focused on reducing barriers to entering the teaching profession, now is not the time to add yet another barrier.

III. TSPC does not regulate out-of-state EPPs: More than 50% of license applications come from outside of Oregon. TSPC proposed legislative concept, which then became SB 129, could have included a different fee scale for out-of-state applicants but did not.

In closing, hampering EPPs with the requirement that they shore up TSPC's agency funding only means that EPPs then have less money with which to grow, innovate, mentor, and guide their teacher preparation programs. It is not the responsibility of any stakeholders to fund TSPC: it is the responsibility of the Legislature and Governor to remove this large barrier to Oregon's educators and EPPs and change TSPC's Other Fund status. .

Given these objections and the impact that these fees have on our ability to prepare teachers and administrators for Oregon schools and communities, I respectfully ask that the Legislative Assembly support HB2609 to end this authority two years early.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jose E. Coll, Interim Dean
College of Education
Portland State University