



3/22/23

Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Hudson and Wright, members of the committee, thank you for having me today to talk about HB 3595. For the record, my name is Kyndall Mason, and I work for the Oregon Education Association. We represent more than 41,000 educators, classified staff, and specialists in Oregon's public K-12 and Community College systems. We also represent members educating youth in our juvenile correctional system.

I am here today to urge support for HB 3595. Our members know all too well the rollercoaster ride that is JDEP/YCEP funding. For starters, juvenile justice education programs are required to provide a longer school year than traditional K-12, but are not given additional funding to do so. This means they are already operating at a deficit. Add to it the fact that students with special needs receive less funding than that they would if they were in a traditional school and you have a system on the precipice of collapse.

These programs provide an opportunity to youth in correctional settings that allows them the chance to build a better future for themselves. Access to an education, regardless of where, means that students have the opportunity to build critical thinking skills and understand the world around them in a manner that facilitates growth. It's amazing the impact our members are able to make with the shoestring budgets they are already on. Further cuts to these programs would devastate the lives of youth already at risk of a bleak future.

In 2021, after one time funding, the legislature made a commitment to build a sustainable funding stream for these programs, and this session is the chance to follow through on that commitment. If you truly believe in the power of education it's time to build a sustainable funding model for those who stand to gain the most from it.

Please support HB 3595, in order to avoid the devastation that would result from inevitable cuts to these crucial programs.

Kyndall Mason
Public Affairs Consultant
Oregon Education Association